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SELECT

FABLES.

BY

Mr. CHARLES DENIS.

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15.8.52

LONDON,
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TO

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

GEORGE,

PRINCE OF WALES.

SIR,

THE celebrated DE LA FONTAINE dedicated great part of his Works to the Grandſon of his auguſt Monarch; a young Prince, whoſe amiable qualities promiſed to the expecting world another TITUS: To whom then, but to your Royal Highneſs, can I addreſs the following Fables? You have the ſame double claim. Was I but as certain to have imitated the humour, eaſe, and peculiar turn of LA FONTAINE,

as I am convinced of the propriety of this Dedication, I might with more boldneſs ſubſcribe myſelf,

SIR,

Your Royal Highneſs's

moſt Obedient, and

moſt Devoted Servant,

CHARLES DENIS.

PREFACE.

IT is, in general, the received opinion that Esop was the firſt inventor of Fables, tho' Quintilian (l. 5. c. 12.) beſtows that honour on Hesiod, who was Homer's cotemporary. This may be true in regard to prophane writers: but it is evident that Parables were made uſe of in the earlieſt ages, as appears by the fable of the trees, related by Jotham, in the book of Judges, long before any of the known Greek Authors. It is indeed of no manner of importance to Esop's reputation who was the firſt Fabuliſt. Certain it is, that he employed

ſo well the ingenious talent he received from nature, as to have left his predeceſſors in oblivion; and poſterity has confirmed to him, every thing excellent of that kind, with the immortal title of Father of the Apologue.

The life of ESOP, wrote by PLANUDES, and others, is undoubtedly fabulous; as moſt legends are: but then it makes a very good Fable. For a Fable is no more than a moral inſtruction diſguiſed under the allegory of an action. It is, as a celebrated French * Critic obſerves, an Epic poem in miniature; but with much greater privileges, both with regard to its ſubject, and the choice of its actors. Fable claims an unbounded walk thro' the whole Creation; commands all nature, perſonifies at will, even things inanimate, and calls for whatever the utmoſt ſtretch of fancy can imagine, to play their different parts on the ſtage of its own erecting. No wonder then that

* Mr. DE LA MOTTE.

Fables

Fables judiciouſly delivered, have been the delight of every people and of every age. Mankind to be inſtructed muſt be amuſed, nay flattered; and therein lies the power of the Apologue. For when ſelf-love is not openly attacked in the cenſure, and the mind at the ſame time is agreeably entertained, in ſearch of the Allegory, we give our aſſent to the doctrine without compulſion; whilſt our vanity is pleaſed, at the thoughts of having diſcovered the latent ſenſe of the Fiction, before the veil is quite removed.

Thus, when the Fabuliſt is ſuppoſed to be a ſlave, and his maſter a Philoſopher, nothing could be more happily conceived. There is a deference and regard due to ſuperiors, in all ſtates of life. Esop had more diſcretion, than to brow-beat his Patron by a direct cenſure; but wiſely conveyed certain truths under the maſk of an Apologue; which contrivance was ſo much the better received, as it carried the marks of his reſpect, equal to thoſe of his veracity.

city. On the other hand it may be reaſonably conjectured that XANTHUS was not entertained barely with the outſide of his Bonds-man's fictions, but muſt no doubt have perceived the intended inſtruction, and excuſed the virtuous boldneſs of the emblem, for ſake of the moral, wit, and invention. All Fabuliſts, and indeed all writers, are in the ſame ſituation with ESOP; we no ſooner commence authors, but we ſubmit ourſelves ſlaves to the public; and have not always to deal with a very indulgent maſter.

As the whole life of ESOP then is a mere fiction, ſo perhaps the deformity of his body was likewiſe ſuppoſed, only as a contraſt to the beauty of his genius and the uprightneſs of his heart. For there are no contemporaries that have deſcribed his perſon; nor is it known what country was honoured by his birth. So diveſted he was of the pride and ſolicitude of an author as never to have once mentioned in his works any thing relating to himſelf.

'Tis

'Tis obvious, by what we gather from his writings, that he compoſed them occaſionally; his aim was to correct our morals, without ſeeming to reprove our faults. He preſented an emblematical glaſs, in which, whoever look'd might find his reſemblance; it was ſufficient for him to have drawn the portrait, he left it to the connoiſſeurs to apply the likeneſs. It plainly appears, that Esop muſt have made a particular ſtudy of the whole animal creation, to have formed ſo many various ſymbols according to different circumſtances and occaſions; in all which he is ſo exact and true to nature, both in characters and propriety, that I dare ſay, ſuch Fables as are not marked with the ſame ſtamp, tho' attributed to him, are not of his production. Whoever made him the pretended preſent, little knew that ſuch abundance was poverty.

Esop either affected, or it was his opinion, that the moſt laconic preciſion was eſſential to the very being of a fable. He

rather runs, than haſtes to his purpoſe, neglecting every flower in his way, rather than ſtop to gather it; as if truth ſtood in need of no embelliſhment: not knowing any medium between the Uſeful and the Unneceſſary. In ſhort, Esop diſcovers a ſublime philoſopher, who, out of humanity, deſcends to the level of the ſmalleſt capacity; and at the ſame time ſo modeſt in regard to his own inventions, as not to think they deſerved any ornaments; or perhaps proud enough to imagine, they wanted none.

Phædrus, who ſtands next in rank to Esop, was likewiſe a ſlave; and like him was alſo made free. But he had one advantage which, we are told, the other had not, a liberal education. Phædrus was trained up from his youth with all imaginable care; when very likely Esop had no other maſter but his own genius; in him the Apologue ſeems the gift of nature. In Phædrus it appears the product of ſtudy, emulation, and a deſire of fame. His ambition

ambition was to be thought the ESOP of the Romans; as VIRGIL, HORACE, and TERENCE, their HOMER, PINDAR, and MENANDER.

The whole design of ESOP was to be useful to mankind; quite regardless of his own reputation, or of what future ages might say of him. His Fables, in all likelyhood, would never have been compiled together, had they not been collected by others. On the contrary, the sole intention of PHÆDRUS was to write a book, in hopes of immortalising his name. Uneasy at the reception some of his works met with, he complains of the malice and envy of his contemporaries, and appeals to after-times for that justice which posterity has granted him. Easy, and correct, his compositions are one continued series of elegance, and simplicity. Concise, but clear: quite happy in the choice of proper epithets, and sometimes giving a description in a single word. All which are so many graces scattered in his works, unknown to the first inventor; beauties, which are very

necessary

neceſſary in a Fable, whoſe ſcope is to pleaſe, the better to inſtruct. Beſides, PHÆDRUS has artfully interwoven the hiſtory of his own times, in ſome of his allegories; he very well knew that the Apologue did not abſolutely conſiſt in fiction, but might likewiſe be conſtituted on real facts; when concurring circumſtances happened to join together, to eſtabliſh any one certain truth. In a word, PHÆDRUS embelliſhes with proper decorations the naked ſimplicity of ESOP, like the drapery of a beautiful Antique, thro' which you diſcover all the graceful proportions, and ſtill captivates his reader with a poliſh'd familiar ſtile, every where judiciouſly adapted to his ſubject.

If I durſt find fault with PHÆDRUS, 'tis when he places, as he too often does, the moral at the head of the Fable; which certainly damps the reader's attention, foreſtalls his judgment, and deprives him of a certain ſecret pride and pleaſure, in finding out the drift of the Apologue, before the riddle is explained.

PILPAY,

PILPAY, after theſe, has a right to be placed, for the antiquity as well as the reputation of his Fables, which have been and ſtill are in the higheſt eſteem thro'out the whole eaſtern world. PILPAY is undoubtedly original in regard to ESOP, not having the leaſt ſimilitude either of his ſtile or manner. He governed part of the Indoſtan empire under a deſpotic Monarch; and as prime miniſter was as much his maſter's ſlave, if not more, than the meaneſt ſubject. So that dependance is here again proved to be the ſource of the Apologue. PILPAY wiſely introduced into his Fables the political ſyſtem of the Indoſtan government; and under the veil of Parables inſtructed his monarch in all the maxims of ſtate and diſcipline of the Empire. NOUSCHIRVAN king of Perſia being informed of the excellency of PILPAY's Fables, ſent his chief Phyſician to the Indies, who there procured a copy, which was tranſlated into the Perſian tongue. From whence the Arabians made a verſion

of

of them; and from which laſt they have been rendered into moſt of the European languages.

Mr. DE LA MOTTE is too ſevere in his remarks on PILPAY. Except, ſays he, a few ſparks of genius, and the merit of invention, I ſhould rather quote him for an example of blemiſhes to avoid, than a model of beauties to imitate. His Fables, continues he, are neither juſt nor natural, but are at the ſame time both ſerious and puerile, abounding in morality without inſtruction, full of contradictions, and then ſo prolix, confuſed, and dogmatical in the arguments he puts into the mouths of his animals, that the reader is bewildered in a maze of precepts, and loſes ſight of what the allegory would inculcate, becauſe it generally wants both uniformity and propriety.

This is a very harſh ſentence, from which I think old PILPAY may with reaſon appeal. LA MOTTE was a great champion for the moderns againſt the antients,

in

in the famous diſpute amongſt the French Critics. What ſucceſs he and his confederates had is well known. Upon which VOLTAIRE ſays, with his uſual vivacity, that LA MOTTE attacked Madam DACIER with no other weapons but wit, and ſhe defended the cauſe with no other arms but erudition. He might have added, what is more extraordinary, that a learned lady overcame a witty man. It is no wonder then, that one who treated the divine HOMER like an old goſſip emptying her budget of winter's tales in the chimney corner, ſhould make ſo free with our Indian fabuliſt. LA FONTAINE however has made him full amends for ſo ſevere a charge, when he ſays, that it is with gratitude he owns how much he is indebted to that Indian ſage for ſeveral of his Fables. His authority will at leaſt counterbalance LA MOTTE's; not but that I think this ingenious critic is in the right, in many of his obſervations, but rather too general in his cenſure.

LA

LA MOTTE was of all the diſputants of his time the moſt polite, for let the controverſy run ever ſo high, he never loſt the gentleman in the critic. A fine example! but little followed. None could write better in proſe, and few much worſe in verſe; his Fables, ſeveral of which I have imitated with my uſual freedom, are moſt of them well invented, their allegories juſt, and the moral naturally deduced; but his ſtile, in which he affects, the manner and meaſure of LA FONTAINE, is ſo widely different from his model, ſo proſaic, ſtiff and pedantic, that was it not for the ſenſe, which every where appears ſtrong, his Fables could ſcarce be read; ſo deficient they are of thoſe ornaments of verſification which are the conſtituents of a poet, tho' not of a genius; where much more is required.

LA FONTAINE, the moſt ingenious of all Fabuliſts, is in himſelf a treaſure of whatever is excellent in ESOP, PHÆDRUS and PILPAY. He ſurpaſſes both the inventor of the

the Apologue and his charming imitator; as elegant, eaſy and natural as PHÆDRUS, not ſo exact indeed, but more diverting; for he has infinitely more wit, conveyed under the ſame ſimplicity. He may, with great propriety, be ſtiled Nature's Poet. All the artleſs charms and native beauties of the Graces flow from his pen, as from their ſource. Thoſe choice and curious flowers which appear in others to have coſt ſo much pains and care to raiſe and cultivate, ſeem to riſe ſpontaneous under his hand. His tales are delightful; they are a perfect model of the familiar narrative ſtile, but rather too free, in regard to their tendency. One would think that LA FONTAINE had in view to make Virtue ſome amends for the wantonneſs of his tales, by the morality of his Fables. It muſt however be owned that he is not altogether free from faults; ſeveral negligences in grammar, and ſome inaccuracies both in conſtruction and verſification are juſtly laid to his charge. He might have been more correct, had he

confined his genius to any one particular kind of Poetry. It is what he ſays of himſelf, and thus deſcribes his own inconſtancy.

Papillon du Parnaſſe, & ſemblable aux Abeilles.
A qui le bon Platon compare nos merveilles;
Je ſuis choſe legére, & vole à tout ſujet;
Je vais de fleur en fleur, & d'objet en objet:
A beaucoup de plaiſir je mêle un peu de gloire.
J'irois plus haut peut-être au Temple de Mémoire,
Si dans un genre ſeul j'avois uſé mes jours.
Mais quoi! je ſuis volage en vers comme en amours.

Juſt as the Bee that ſettles on each ſweet,
I ſtop and taſte of every flower I meet:
Regardleſs where I go, or whence I came,
I ſeek much pleaſure with a little fame.
Had I with arduous ſteps purſu'd one road,
I might perhaps have climb'd to Fame's abode.
But no --- a rover in each ſcene I prove,
As fickle in my lays --- as in my love.

And yet had LA FONTAINE's productions been more laboured, they might have been leſs admired. His drawing is always true; and when he pleaſes to heighten the colouring, it cannot be ſurpaſſed; tho' here and there ſome part of the perſpective or

the

the folds of a drapery may want exactneſs; but even theſe blemiſhes are in him ſometimes beauties, and juſtify what our Engliſh HORACE ſo finely expreſſes.

Great wits ſometimes may glorioufly offend,
And riſe to faults true critics dare not mend.
From vulgar bounds with brave diſorder part,
And ſnatch a grace beyond the reach of art.

After what I have ſaid of LA FONTAINE, it may be thought preſumptuous to attempt even to give a ſketch of his perfections; but there may be ſome merit in attempting. 'Tis all I claim.

I have not endeavoured to tranſlate him; that would be impoſſible, and at the ſame time to preſerve his beauties. I have taken that liberty with him which he has taken with others. Whoever pretends by a ſervile imitation to ſhew the merit of an author of genius, will be, at beſt, but an indifferent copy of a good original. My chief aim, not only in thoſe Fables which I have imitated from LA FONTAINE, but in all that I have wrote, has been to ſeize, as far as my force could reach, that ſpirit,

eaſe, and ſimplicity which this amiable poet has fixed for the true ſtandard of familiar narration, and a model for all future Fabuliſts. When I ſay model, I mean as to his manner; genius is the gift of heaven; but taſte may be refined, and elegance acquired, by reading over and over ſuch ancients as have ſtood the teſt of ages, and ſuch moderns as will be tranſmitted to Poſterity. A genteel behaviour is acquired by living in the polite world; not by attempting to copy ſuch or ſuch perſon's particular air and addreſs, be it ever ſo agreeable, for ſuch an imitation would be no better than mimickry: but, by the intercourſe and converſation of people of faſhion, a certain open eaſy deportment is attained; ſo, in like manner, by converſing with the beſt writers, you catch their ſpirit, which grows habitual, and becomes your own. Nothing ſo dangerous as to aſſume the character of another; for it often happens you are neither your ſelf, nor any body elſe. Should an actor pretend to

copy thoſe inimitable touches of nature ſo conſpicious in the Roscius of this age, which ſeem to flow as much from the ſenſations of his heart, as from the perception and reflection of his mind: Such a one, I ſay, muſt make but an idle figure; when perhaps he might appear to advantage, by anſwering to the impulſe of his own feeling, according to his alloted talent and peculiar manner. HANDEL is equally true and harmonious, whether his ſweet notes are played upon the flute or the violin, by a compleat maſter of either inſtrument. Nature is the only model for imitation; who there can copy truly, is original.

As for the following Fables, which are the fruits of ſome leiſure hours, abſtracted from buſineſs of a very different nature, ſhould they amuſe the Prince who graciouſly honours them with his Royal name, and be acceptable to the Public, I have gained my ends.

PREFACE.

CONTENTS

PART

I. U

II. The [illegible]

III. The [illegible]

IV. The [illegible]

V. The [illegible]

VI. The [illegible]

VII. The [illegible]

[illegible] Manner

VIII. The [illegible]

IX. The [illegible]

THE

CONTENTS.

FABLE

I. ULyſſes and his Companions. p. 1.

II. The Oracle. 9

III. The Acorn and the Pumpkin. 16

IV. The Plague among the Beaſts. 19

V. The Power of Fables. 25

VI. The Peaſant and his Aſs. 31

VII. The Gardener and the Lord of the Manour. 33

VIII. The Journey. 39

IX. The Four Adventurers. 43

FABLE

X. The Aſtrologer that tumbled into a Well. p. 48

XI. The Satchels of Fate. 50

XII. The Fortune-Tellers. 53

XIII. The Lyoneſs and the Bitch. 58

XIV. The Aſs and his different Maſters. 62

XV. The Aſs and the Lap-Dog. 65

XVI. Peace. 69

XVII. Death and the Dying Man. 75

XVIII. Death and the Woodman. 79

XIX. The Ant and the Graſshopper. 81

XX. The Crow and the Fox. 83

XXI. The Frog and the Ox. 85

XXII. The Cock, the Cat, and the Young Mouſe. 87

XXIII. The Two Doves. 91

XXIV. The Mountain in Labour. 96

CONTENTS.

FABLE

XXV. The Ploughſhare and the Sword. p. 97
XXVI. Mercury and the Shades. 102
XXVII. Love and Death. 108
XXVIII. The Bat and the Two Weaſels. 111
XXIX. The Two Books. 113
XXX. The Connoiſſeurs. 116
XXXI. Jupiter and the Farmer. 121
XXXII. The Camel and the Floating-Tub. 124
XXXIII. The Lyon's Court. 125
XXXIV. The King and the Shepherd. 129
XXXV. The Two Extreams. 135
XXXVI. The Miſer and his Friend. 138
XXXVII. The Piſmire and the Fly. 141
XXXVIII. Jupiter's Lottery. 146
XXXIX. The Animal Comedians. 148
XL. The Fox, the Hedge-Hog, and the Flies. 152
XLI. The Young Widow. 156

The

FABLE

XLII. The Fairy Cap. p. 160
XLIII. The Cat and the Rat. 167
XLIV. The Bird wounded with an Arrow. 171
XLV. The Dog and the Cat. 172
XLVI. The Conqueror and the Old Woman. 176
XLVII. The Election. 179
XLVIII. The Man and the Snake. 182
XLIX. The Wolf and the Shepherds. 188
L. The Enchantreſs. 192
LI. The Kite and the Nightingale. 195
LII. The Egyptian Gods. 197
LIII. The Partnerſhip with the Lion. 200
LIV. The Man and the Mermaid. 202
LV. The Fairy Elf and his Hoſts. 204
LVI. The Oyſter and the Rat. 209
LVII. The Quarrel. 212
LVIII. Pandora. 217

The

FABLE

LIX. The Hunter and the Wolf. p. 221
LX. The Weaſel. 225
LXI. The Fox and the Grapes. 227
LXII. The Lyoneſs and the Bear. 228
LXIII. The Cat and the Bat. 231
LXIV. The Statuary and the Statute. 234
LXV. The Scythian Philoſopher. 237
LXVI. The Elephant and Jupiter's Ape. 241
LXVII. The King, his Son, and the Two Parrots. 245
LXVIII. The Mountebank Deities. 249
LXIX. The Man and the Flea. 253
LXX. The Cock and the Fox. 255
LXXI. The Two Mules. 257
LXXII. The Fiſherman and the Little Fiſh. 260
LXXIII. The Wiſhes. 263

FABLE

LXXIV. The Three Youngſters and the Old Man. p. 270

LXXV. The Two Dreams. 273

LXXVI. The Story-Tellers. 279

LXXVII. A Saying of Socrates. 282

LXXVIII. The Wallet. 283

LXXIX. The Old Lyon. 287

LXXX. The Bees. 289

LXXXI. The Footman and the Magpye. 293

LXXXII. The Advantage of Learning. 296

LXXXIII. The Shepherd and the Sea. 299

LXXXIV. The Rat and the Elephant. 303

LXXXV. The Two Statues. 305

LXXXVI. The Wolf and the Maſtiff. 311

LXXXVII. The Footman and his Young Maſter. 314

LXXXVIII. The Aſs in a Lyon's ſkin. 320

FABLE

LXXXIX. Apollo, Mercury, and the Shepherd. p. 321

XC. Minos and the Miſer. 326

XCI. The Roe, the Crow, the Tortoiſe and the Rat. 330

XCII. Hercules and the Waggoner. 335

XCIII. The Hunter after Fortune. 337

XCIV. The Fox, the Cat, and the Spider. 343

XCV. The Eagle and the Owl. 347

XCVI. The Duck, the Bramble, and the Bat. 351

XCVII. The Adventurer and the Treaſure. 355

XCVIII. The Man and the Horſe. 359

XCIX. Mercury and the Woodman. 365

C. Tribute ſent to Alexander, by the Brutes. 369

CI. The Carriers. 376

CII. The Roſe and the Butterfly. 379

FABLE

CIII. The Mule proud of his Genealogy. p. 383

CIV. The Old Maid. 385

CV. The Vulturs and the Pidgeons. 390

CVI. The Lyoneſs's Funeral. 394

CVII. Progné and Philomela. 399

CVIII. The Man who knew his Deſtiny. 401

CIX. The Scold. 404

CX. The Rabbits. 409

CXI. Time preſent and Time to come. 412

CXII. The Cobler and his Neighbour. 415

CXIII. The Dogs. 419

CXIV. Friends too much of a mind. 422

CXV. A Monarch for the Brutes. 425

CXVI. The Merchant and the Baſſa. 428

CXVII. The Horſe and the Lyon. 433

The

FABLE

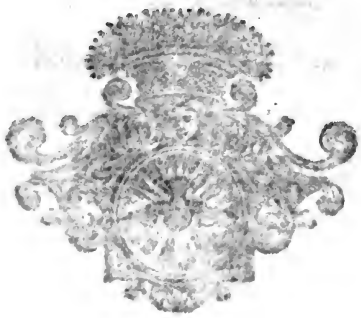
CXVIII. The Farmer and the Robin Red-Breaſt. p. 437

CXIX. The Peaſant from the Banks of the Danube. 438

CXX. The Phœnix and the Owl. 444

ERRATA.

Page 31. l. 12. *instead of* to cry, *read* cries out.
113. l. 1. guilt, *read* gilt.
202. l. 13. liquid main, *read* liquid Plain.
243. l. 18. notins, *read* notions.
365. l. 5. *omit* Only.
401. l. 10. *instead of* from, *read* form.



FABLE I.

ULYSSES and his COMPANIONS.

To His ROYAL HIGHNESS

GEORGE Prince of WALES.

THE Muſe to GEORGE her offering brings,
And on gay Fiction's ſportive wings
Attempts her Moral flight.
Attend, young Prince, to what ſhe ſings,
'Tis Truth; how little heard by Kings!
How ſeldom in their ſight!
O England's Hope, fram'd with each outward grace,
Now is the time to form your mind.
May every Virtue in your heart take place,

And juſt to BRUNSWICK's Race,
Adorn the world and bleſs mankind.
So ſhall you look with ſcorn on thoſe
Whom in this Fable I expoſe.

Behold the Greeks with CIRCE's nectar drunk,
Who wildly revell'd at her wanton feaſts;
In ſenſual pleaſures plung'd and ſunk,
Were all transform'd to Beaſts.

The ten years Siege was o'er,
And Troy was now no more,
When Sage ULYSSES and his Men
Embark'd, in hopes to greet again
Their long-lamented native ſhore.
Toſt to and fro, uncertain of their way,
Of winds and waves the cruel ſport,
At laſt they reach'd the fatal bay,

Where

Where CIRCE, daughter of the God of day,
Kept her enchanting Court.
With Syren ſmiles ſhe gave the Nectar'd bowl,
Sweet to the taſte, but bitter to the ſoul:
Swift thro' each vein the poiſon ran,
And ſoon the Beaſt abſorb'd the Man;
For now a different form they wear,
The Wolf, the Hog, the Lion and the Bear.
The Prince of ITHACA alone
Eſcap'd her ſubtle art;
His looks, his words, in all the Hero ſhone;
She gaz'd, ſhe heard, ſhe felt the pleaſing ſmart.
And now a poiſon, not unlike her own,
Firſt ſeiz'd her eyes, and then her heart;
Indeed it quite inflam'd the latter.
And ſo ſhe ſpoke her mind both frank and plain;
For Goddeſſes ne'er mince the matter,
Nor chuſe to ſigh in vain.

The Grecian Chief refus'd not to comply.
But firſt, he wiſh'd his metamorphiz'd train
Their former figures might regain.
Th' immortal Nymph then made reply,
You have, dear Prince, my full conſent;
Here, take this magic wand and try
Th' experiment.
Depend upon't, if you require it,
They all ſhall ſoon relapſe to Men;
But then,
They muſt themſelves deſire it.

Thus happy to have gain'd his ends,
Away he haſtes to find his friends.
Dear country-men, ſaid he, the charm is broke;
Be human kind again, and Brutes no more.
At which the Lion thought to roar,
But thus majeſtic ſpoke.

Shall I renounce my teeth and claws,
And be a ſlave that now am free?
What ſhall I get by following thee?
Diſmiſt, perhaps, without a cauſe;
Or into wretched winter quarters ſent
A Drummer to ſome marching Regiment;
I that am King where ere I range.
No, no; I like my ſtate too well to change.

Then to the Bear our Hero went.
How brute you look? ſaid he, how rough your hair!
How ſhould I look but like a Bear?
BRUIN reply'd, here is indeed a pother!
And who told you, I pray,
My dear conceited former brother,
This ſhape or that was better than another
If mine offends, why turn away;
Go aſk the tender object of my love,

Whether ſhe does my form approve.
Perhaps you think my reſolution ſtrange;
But, Sir, I like my ſtate too well to change.

The Prince then left this more than Ruſſian Bear,
And to the Wolf propos'd th' affair.
Companion, I am quite aſham'd,
Nor for the world would have it nam'd;
A Pretty Laſs in yonder plain,
Laments her favourite Lambkin ſlain:
Weeping, ſhe ſits upon the ground,
And tells the Echoes all around,
Thou art the cauſe of her deſpair.
I know the time when beauty was thy care,
When with a lover's eager haſte you'd ran
To ſave her ſheep, and pleaſe the Fair.
Then be thyſelf again, with me repair,
No longer thieving Wolf, but honeſt Man.

And is there one? pray ſhew him if you can,
Reply'd the Wolf, this is in troth an air:
For is there ought but what you men devour?
Mere Tyrants when in power,
And worſe than wolves I ſay,
For you on one another prey.
I tell you, therefore, without further prate,
Tis fixt; I will not change my ſtate.

To Each ULYSSES ſpoke the ſame,
And every one alike reply'd:
Loſt to Humanity, to Virtue, and to Fame,
Slaves to themſelves, their Paſſions were their guide.

When Mortals from the paths of Honour ſtray,
And the ſtrong paſſions over reaſon ſway,
What are they then but Brutes?
'Tis Vice alone that conſtitutes

Th' enchanting wand and magic bowl,
Th' exterior form of Man they wear,
But are in fact both Wolf and Bear,
The transformation's in the Soul.

FABLE

FABLE II.

The ORACLE.

To Her Royal Highness

The PRINCESS DOWAGER of WALES.

GREAT Princess, you to whom 'tis given
The bliss of Nations to bestow,
To you, next to all-gracious heaven,
What will not future ages owe?

Again Britannia rears her head,
And turns to you her wishful eyes;
Her Favourite's gone, but in his stead
She sees his num'rous Race arise.

Proceed

Proceed, and teach each royal youth,
And teach each royal fair,
To tread the paths of awful truth,
And ſhun the flatt'rer's ſnare.

A Bright example ſtands in view,
(Vouchſafe, kind Heaven, to hear my prayer)
O may they all but copy you,
And England has no further care.

Tis ſaid, a Grecian King, in times of old,
To DELPHOS went, to have his fortune told:
What labour'd in the Monarch's mind,
Was how a friend to find,
And by what tokens know
Whether he was a friend or no.
Friendſhips to Kings
Are doubtful things;

All

All ſay they would their lives lay down,
Their Loyalty to prove;
But who can ſay which 'tis they love,
His perſon or his crown?
This was the knotty point that gave him pain,
And which he begg'd APOLLO to explain.
When thus the Oracle replies.
" The Man who neither fawns nor lies,
" Who praiſes when it is thy due,
" But dares diſpleaſing truths to tell,
" And ſet thy faults in view;
" Him cheriſh, for he loves thee well."
The King conceal'd the Oracle's reſult.
Each Courtier then into the temple went,
All with the ſame intent;
For what they wanted to conſult,
Was how to play *the* certain part,
To captivate their monarch's heart.

APOLLO

Apollo ſaid, fawn, lie, and never fear,
When Flatt'ry ſpeaks, Pride lends an ear:
It is the only way to keep in place:
One word of truth of any ſort,
If it ſpoils ſport,
Will ſurely bring diſgrace.
The God, 'tis plain, had been at Court.

The King reſolves the Oracle to try,
And calls them to a feaſt; Come friends, ſaid he,
Let us be jovial, frank and free:
For freedom is the ſoul of joy.
When here I came, I left the King behind.
Friendſhip, like love, ſquares all mankind.
Then let us all our thoughts impart,
And every mouth pronounce the heart.
Begin by me; and ſay what faults you find.

How

How find out faults where none are to be found?
All cry'd in Chorus, as the cup went round:
All except One, who ſerious ſat,
As if unmindful of their chat.
When thus the King, good CLYTUS, why ſo dumb?
Why knit thy brows and look ſo grum?
I was reflecting on your future fame,
Reply'd old CLY, and cannot chuſe but blame
Theſe fulſome flatterers that buzz about:
You have great qualities, no doubt,
Which may endear your name.
But then I ſee a fault that will diſgrace
Thoſe virtues which ſo lovely ſhine;
You take too much delight in wine:
And drunkenneſs will ill become a face,
Which ſhould appear divine.
What inſolence is this I hear?

The furious King replies.
Down, down to hell, and give thy counſel there:
For earth thou art by much too wiſe.
He ſaid; and lanced the fatal ſpear,
When thus Old CLYTUS ſpoke, ere yet he dies:
To me, alas! the Oracle proves true.
I die my Liege, and die for you.
Prompted by love, and fir'd with zeal,
I could not, as your Friend, conceal
A fault which might your laurels blaſt,
And fully all your glory paſt.
Ye irritated Gods! the Monarch cry'd,
And have I then my only Friend deſtroy'd?
And muſt I here be left a prey,
To all this ſervile flattering crew?
I muſt---the puniſhment I own is due.
O ſtay, my counſellor, my CLYTUS ſtay,
My raſhneſs I ſhall ever rue.

Enough;

Enough; reply'd th' expiring Friend,
I die content, if you amend.

PRINCESS, to your diſcerning eyes,
No need to point wherein the moral lies.

FABLE III.

The ACORN and the PUMPKIN.

WHAT ever is, is right; by that abide:
Unerring Nature never ſteps aſide.
I find th' example in a Pumpkin.

It happ'ned once, a country Bumpkin
Reflecting on the monſtrous ſize
Of this huge garden ſtuff;
Methinks, ſaid he, it was not over wiſe,
To place it on the dunghill where it lies:
Are there not trees enough?
I would have hung it on yon Oak;
And then t'would be,
Like fruit like tree:

But

But as things are, 'tis quite a joke.
Why, ROGER, this is wiſely ſpoke;
And pity 'tis you was not there,
When Nature firſt her laws enacted:
You would, no doubt, have better acted,
And plac'd each being in its proper ſphere.
An Acorn was a fruit ſo ſmall, ſo light,
It wanted, ſurely, no ſuch ſtrong ſupport;
There was ſome blunder in the heav'nly Court,
'Twas plain;
And ROGER fain
Would ſet it right.
Heads ſeldom ſleep where Politics abound,
At leaſt not very ſound.
Howe'er, beneath the Oak our Ruſtic lay,
To take a nap and ſhun the heat of day.
But ere his eyes began to cloſe,
An Acorn drop'd and hit his noſe.

Sudden he ſtarts! how's this? I bleed!
Cries out th' affrighted Bumpkin;
Zooks! had this Acorn been a Pumpkin,
I had been finely ſmaſh'd indeed!

Roger at this his error ſaw;
And ſtruck with penitential awe,
Gave Providence its due:
Fully convinced that Heaven knew,
Better than him, or thee or me,
What ſhould or ſhould not be.

FABLE IV.

The PLAGUE among the BEASTS.

THAT woe which death and horror ſpreads,
And of all woes mankind moſt dreads,
Which Heaven in higheſt anger fram'd,
The Plague, in ſhort; for ſo 'tis nam'd,
Amongſt the brutes its baleful influence ſhed.
Thouſands were dying, thouſands dead;
Aghaſt, diſmay'd, both birds and beaſts
Hung down their heads neglectful of their food:
Nor longer now the Lyon feaſts,
Regal'd in harmleſs blood.
E'en Wolves and Foxes ſicken at the ſight
Of Geeſe and Lambkins, once their dear delight:
The very Doves from one another fly;

When love is flown, then farewell Joy.

The Lyon in this dreadful caſe,
A Council ſummons; takes his place,
And thus a ſpeech begins.
O Friends! too ſure 'tis for our Sins,
That Heaven has pour'd this vengeance on our Race
What's to be done? and how diſpell
The threat'ning ſtorm that o'er us low'rs?
If we believe what grave hiſtorians tell,
The way to calm the angry powers,
Be they of Heaven or Hell,
Is to devote a victim to their Ire.
Then let us each into ourſelves inquire,
And he who has the greateſt crimes committed,
Shall on the ſacred altar fall,
A juſt attonement for us all;
So be our Sins remitted.

Therefore

Therefore let each his conſcience ſift,
Without deceit or ſhift,
And ſpeak the Truth, nor more nor leſs.
For me, I frankly here confeſs,
By gluttony too often led,
On many a Sheep and Lamb I've fed;
For which I now ſincerely rue;
And to compleat my crimes,
Sometimes,
I've eat the Shepherd too.
Then ſee me, ſelf-devoted, yield my breath;
Happy your King! if by his death
Your healths he can regain;
O! 'tis a thought which to my laſt I'll cheriſh:
But let me not be ſacrificed in vain.
Since only the moſt criminal muſt die,
Each ſhould accuſe himſelf as well as I;
And may the guilty periſh.

The Fox, who all this while lay by,
Turn'd up a penitential eye,
And faintly thus begun:
Dread Sir, indeed you are too good,
What! ſpill your royal blood!
Forbid it ſtars and moon and ſun.
Ah! who would purchaſe life at ſuch a price?
My Liege, your ſcruples are too nice:
You've fleec'd ſometimes a Sheep; what then?
'Twere no great matter had that one been ten;
Is it a crime ſuch ſilly things to eat?
You honour them too much: and as for Men,
Why did they not oppoſe their fate?
Thoſe proud conceited creatures, who dare call
Themſelves, the Lords and Maſters of us all.
They well deſerv'd their wretched end.
So REYNARD ſpoke. The courtiers all commend.
The Leopards, Tygers, and the Bears,

Came

Came off quite clear in their affairs.
E'en to the Maſtiff; all the fighting crew
Had naught but trivial faults, and thoſe but few.
Then in his turn came poor Jack-aſs,
His long ears couch'd upon his back.
In the Church-yard where I was wont to paſs,
Said he, by wicked inſtigation led,
Not having fear before my eyes, alack!
I ſtop't and ſtole a bite or two of graſs.
One reaſon in my favour might be ſaid,
Hunger, you know, breaks thro'---
At this they all cry'd out halloo.
What! rob the Parſon's ground!
No wonder, truly, Heaven frown'd.
Of all religion he is ſure bereft!
Why! here is ſacrilege as well as theft!
A Wolf that had ſome ſmatt'ring in the law,
(For Wolves are Lawyers born of courſe)

Prov'd that to keep the thieves in awe,
The laws neglected ſhould be put in force.
As for the Culprit at the bar,
No need for witneſſes from far.
And ſo concluded in a breath,
Self-accuſation --- guilty --- Death.

The Court can make you black or white:
If Poor you're wrong, if Rich you're right.

FABLE V.

The POWER of FABLES.

To the RIGHT HONOURABLE

The EARL of CHESTERFIELD.

THUS to the God of verſe, an unknown Muſe
Indicted her requeſt. Pleaſe to peruſe,
And grant the boon I aſk;
She fain would *Cheſterfield* amuſe,
But feels herſelf unequal to the taſk;
Therefore for your aſſiſtance ſues.
You ſee your favourite every day;
Tell him I'm young, afraid to roam,
And fain would make his houſe my home.

A very modeſt prayer you'll ſay,
And as I'm told within his doors,
I ſhall meet none but Friends of yours;
I don't much care how long I ſtay.
So, as in duty bound, I'll ever pray.

The God at this petition ſmil'd,
And ſaid, what's this you claim?
Do you then know, aſpiring child,
That *Cheſterfield*'s applauſe is Fame?
I do; the Muſe ſtrait made reply,
And that's the very reaſon why
I came:
And as you Gods in bribes delight,
(Things which from earth are baniſh't quite)
Should he be pleas'd with what I write,
A hundred Sheep ſhall on your Altars ſmoke.
Depend upon't a Poet's word is ſpoke;

And

And that's no Joke.
But hold; a hundred Verſe I ſhould have ſaid;
How'ere, 'tis ſmoke for ſmoke; and ſo you're paid.
APOLLO laught at the conceit,
And kindly gave me this receipt,
Your Lordſhip's praiſe to gain:
" Would you my *Cheſterfield*'s eſteem obtain,
" Let Truth o'er all you write preſide;
" Of Wit and Senſe add what you may,
" The more the better, ſo he'll ſay;
" But chief let Virtue be your guide;
" For if from her you ſtray,
" Farewell to his applauſe, and future glory."
He ſaid. I bow'd; and ſo begin my ſtory.

At Athens dwelt, in times of yore,
An Orator, DEMETES nam'd;
For eloquence much fam'd,

For

For patriotiſm more.
His Country's danger was his only fear.
Now as report was ſpread, the foe was near,
He to the tribune haſtes, and thus declaims:
O ye Athenians! why theſe idle games?
Break off, and ſtop the ruin which impends,
Ere yet you ſee your Temples wrapt in flames.
Then talkt of Wives, of Children, and of Friends,
And all thoſe tender names,
By which Dame Rhet'ric gains her ends;
Then roll'd the thunder, ſtir'd both earth and ſea,
With tropes and metaphors the ſhining train;
Now makes the dead to ſpeak, but ſpeak in vain;
The wind puff'd every word away.
In vain by turns he threatens, ſooths, and ſtorms,
With all the wonders eloquence performs,
On Men, on Gods, he vainly calls aloud,
Nothing could move the giddy crowd;

That creature with a thouſand heads,
Which veer with every breeze that blows,
That nothing heeds, that nothing dreads,
Nor any danger knows,
But when it feels its woes.

What does our Orator in this extream?
He chang'd his tone, and thus purſued his theme:

Ceres, a *Swallow* and an *Eel*, one day,
(The company was odd you'll ſay)
A Journey undertook. They jogg'd along,
With ſometimes chat and ſometimes ſong,
As travellers are wont to do;
A River ſtop'd them in their way.
The *Eel* ſwam over, and the *Swallow* flew,---
And what became of *Ceres*, pray?
Cry'd out th' attentive crew.
Ceres, with indignation mov'd,

Thus

Thus you her thoughtleſs ſons reprov'd:
Why don't you aſk what PHILLIP's doing?
Can I behold you led aſtray,
Amus'd with tales and children's play,
And not forwarn you of your ruin?
When all the Grecian ſtates
In freedom's cauſe are up in arms,
Athens alone feels no alarms,
Tho' now the Foe is thund'ring at her gates.

This keen reproach ſtung deep;
A Fable waked them from their ſleep.

Thus in the Senate *Cheſterfield* had ſpoke,
Where, was it poſſible his ſenſe could fail?---
DEMETES like, he'd fix them with a Tale;
Or rouze them with a Joke.

FABLE VI.

The PEASANT and his ASS.

AS on the road a Peaſant drove his Aſs,
He ſpied a meadow rich in graſs;
And tho' he had no right to do it,
He dar'd the Pound, and turn'd the beaſt into it.
The Jack-aſs charm'd at ſuch a treat,
With choice to crop and time to eat,
Graz'd here and there the field all over;---
Then pranc'd and rear'd and toſt his head,
And in the thick on't made his bed,
Like one that's nurſt in clover.
Amidſt this Jubilee the Foe appears;
And Clown to cry, haſte, haſte away.
At which our Aſs prick'd up his ears,

And

And bray'd, no friend, I chuſe to ſtay.
Will thoſe Folks load a double pack
Upon my back?
Why no. Then what is it to me,
If I belong to them or thee?
You may by flight your freedom ſave,
If you diſdain to be a ſlave:
For me it is no new diſaſter;
Nor do I know
The thing that I can call my Foe,
Except my Maſter.

FABLE VII.

The GARDINER and the LORD of the MANOUR.

THERE lived, no matter in what Shire,
A Gard'ner of ſome note;
A freeman born, he gave his vote,
Uninfluenc'd by hope or fear:
His houſe, tho' thatch't, was neat and tight,
A field or two there were cloſe by't;
Enough, I trow,
To graze a horſe and keep a cow;
But in his garden lay his chief delight.
No fam'd Exotics with hard names,
Shut up in frames,

Were there; but jeſſamin and roſes grew,
With lettices and parſley too,
And onions not a few.
Each herb and flower, in order plac'd,
The beds and borders grac'd;
Some for the ſmell, ſome for the palate,
You might according to your taſte,
Gather a noſegay or a ſallet.
This happy ſcene was ruffled by a Hare,
That crop't and munch't and friſk't about,
Eſcaping every gin and ſnare;
It matters not how he got there,
The buſineſs was to get him out.
Unto a neighbouring Lord our Gard'ner went,
To beg aſſiſtance in this ſad event.
The Devil is in the Hare, he cry'd,
Or elſe ſome Witch in ſhape of Puſs,
To plague me thus.

We

Well Devil or Witch, the Lord reply'd,
I'll rout him out, or *Fowler* is bely'd.
But when? to-morrow morn by break of day.
The Gard'ner bow'd and trudg'd away.

True to his promiſe came my Lord,
(For Lords, you know, ne'er break their word)
With all his men and horſe and hounds;
We'll catch him if he's in the grounds.
But firſt; for nothing raſhly ſhould be done,
Let's breakfaſt, ere this Hare we run.
What hams! Weſphalia, I preſume;
How fine they ſmell! they're all perfume;
Thoſe chickens there ſeem very nice.
My Lord, they're roaſted in a trice.
Is this your Daughter? pray draw near.
A pretty Girl, I vow and ſwear.
And who's the happy ſweet-heart, pray?

And when's to be the wedding day?
You ſhould have been a grandfather by this.
So ſaid, he raviſhes a kiſs;
And greater freedoms would have follow'd,
Had not juſt then the huntſman hallow'd.

Now all are mounted for the chace;
Jowler already ſcents the trace.
Away they gallop o'er his plots;
Down fall the ſtands, ſmaſh go the pots.
Adieu ye ſallets, farewell flowers,
His parſley beds and jeſſ'min bowers.
In vain the hunters he implores;
O ſpare my winter and my ſummer ſtores.
Blind to his loſs, deaf to his cries,
Have Lords or Princes ears or eyes,
But as it ſuits their pleaſure?
And which of you,

Poor

Poor ſervile crew,
Shall dare preſcribe the meaſure?
In ſhort, ſpite of his prayers and tears,
They in one hour laid waſte more ground
Than all the Hares for ten miles round,
Could damage in ten years.

All went to rack: and now too late
The Gard'ner mourns his wretched fate.
My hams and chickens gone to pot;
Proviſions, liquor, and what not?
And then to heighten my diſgrace,
My Daughter kiſs't before my face;
But worſt of all, and what I moſt ſhall rue,
My garden which my ſoul enjoy'd,
Is quite deſtroy'd:
Oh! what had I with noble folks to do?

Ye petty Princes, and ye little ſtates,
Among yourſelves adjuſt your own debates.
If ere you call in greater Pow'rs for aid,
You'll be neglected, or you'll be betray'd.
A truth by ſad experience known too well,
As *Corſica* and *Genoa* can tell.
Subſervient to their Mediator's will,
The French are on the iſland ſtill.

FABLE VIII.

The JOURNEY.

VIRTUE, Genius, Reputation,
(Tho' near related yet good friends)
Reſolv'd, no doubt for public ends,
To make a tour throughout the Nation.
Ere we, ſays Genius, quit our own abode,
As accidents may happen on the road,
(Precaution ſeldom ſpeaks in vain)
Let us on certain ſigns agree,
In caſe we ſhould part company,
Which way to meet again.
To trace my haunts I'll give a certain clew.
Wherever arts and ſciences you view,
Where painting and where ſculpture ſtill are ſhewn,

On breathing canvas and on living ſtone;
Where works like theſe, with taſte refin'd you ſee,
Bold without raſhneſs, without wildneſs free;
And where APOLLO and the Nine inſpire;
Verſe wrote with eaſe, ſimplicity and fire;
And proſe ſublime, preciſe and clear,
You may be ſure I'm ſomewhere near.
Beſides, there is a place, Chyſwick yclep'd,
Where ſtands a ſtructure ſmall, but fair:
When Taſte from gothic hands eſcap'd,
It found a refuge there.
There oft the Muſe, with ſkill divine,
Attun'd th' immortal lyre;
And there I often too retire,
With many friends of yours and mine.
So Genius ſpoke, and Virtue thus reply'd:
No need to ſearch the town and country round,
You're ſafe enough where you abide.

I wiſh that I could give ſo ſure a guide;
But really when I chance to ſlip aſide,
I'm not ſo eaſy to be found.
Howere, ſhould you in any place eſpy
A rich Man liſt'ning to the orphan's cry,
Who neither ſhuts his heart nor door,
But pities and relieves the poor;
A Miniſter of ſtate averſe to pelf,
Who loves the Public better than himſelf;
A friend who parts with half his ſtore,
His friend to reſcue from diſtreſs;
Who in misfortune loves him ſtill the more,
And th' other, tho' oblig'd, not love him leſs:
A modern Lady who deteſts a rout,
A Prude without hypocriſy devout;
A Biſhop free from pride, a Judge upright,
A middling Poet without ſpight;
You'll find me there, or there about.

I'm

I'm ſcarce ere to be met at Court,
And in the City only now and then;
The Deſert is my ſureſt port,
And there with pleaſure I reſort,
Unknown to Vice and far from Men.

Your ſchemes are ſettled in ſo true a light,
Says Reputation, that I make no doubt
You muſt, if ſtray'd, be ſoon found out.
With me the caſe is diff'rent quite:
Reſearches, Tokens, all are vain.
Be cautious how you truſt me out of ſight,
For when once loſt I ne'er am found again.

FABLE IX.

The FOUR ADVENTURERS.

To the RIGHT HONOURABLE

LORD ANSON.

IN vain the Muſe attempts her voice to raiſe,
If equal to the Man muſt be the praiſe;
Whilſt round the Globe ſhe traces *Anſon*'s name,
She finds it in each clime conſign'd to Fame.
Safe thro' the dangers of the Seas he rides,
Where Reſolution leads and Prudence guides.
How calm! how bold! above the frowns of Fate,
Let *Juan Fernandes* and *Tinian* relate.
Hiſtoric truth outvies poetic fire;
What then remains? to wonder and admire!

If

If to your Lordſhip I addreſs this tale,
'Tis leſs to ſpeak your praiſe than ſhew my zeal.

A Prince, a Duke, a Merchant and a Swain,
All hunters of new worlds were wreck't together;
To North or South? I can't tell whether;
Nor much imports it to explain.
Reduc'd to BELISARIUS' fate,
Half naked, dripping from the main,
They now muſt beg from gate to gate,
Some ſmall relief to gain.
The Prince began to mourn his dire diſgrace,
How frail was grandeur, and how vain!
Miſfortunes level all the human race;
For what is now my Highneſs? or your Grace?
'Tis mighty well, then interrupts the Swain,
If to complain
Could ſet us all to rights again;

But

But as it nought avails, let's work I ſay.
A ſhepherd thus adviſe! why not I pray?
Are ſenſe and judgment then confin'd
To thoſe alone who ſcepters ſway?
As if the ſhepherd, like his bleating kind,
Had nothing elſe to ſay
But bay.
Howere, all to the ſcheme propos'd agreed.
For is there ought ſo tractable as need?
And now, what's to be done?
Methinks, reply'd the Monarch's ſon,
I Politics could teach;
And I Accounts, cry'd out the man of trade,
Thoſe branches are within our reach.
The taſk be mine, the noble Peer then ſaid,
Of Heraldry to ſhew the uſeful rules:
That jargon which ſo charms the great,
Blazons their badge, and ranks their rate;

As if ſuch ſtuff as Argent, Ore and Gules,
Trophies of European ſtate,
Could ere be taught in Indian ſchools.
So much per month we ſure may earn,
For people will be glad to learn.
Not they, reſum'd our ſhepherd with a ſmile,
You and your month, you talk at eaſe;
A month has thirty days!
And can you faſt then all that while?
No doubt your proſpect's very fine;
But 'tis a diſtant one you'll own.
And pray upon what fund or loan
Are we this day to dine?
My ſtomach can't for ſupper ſtay;
Come follow then, I'll ſhew the way.
So ſaid, ſome wood he fells, the faggots ties,
And by the ſale their preſent wants ſupplies.

Or elſe 'tis very plain
Our ſchemers muſt, by hunger hurl'd
To PLUTO's gloomy reign,
Have ſhewn their talents in another world.

Thus *Anſon* ſav'd from death and from deſpair,
BRITANNIA's ſons committed to his care:
* As glorious and as great with Ax in hand,
† As when the third of May he bore command.

* When the Centurion, which had been drove to ſea from *Tinian*, returned to the iſland, Lord *Anſon* was then with his Ax in hand encouraging his Men to lengthen out their boat. *Vide* Voyage round the World.

† The day his Lordſhip obtained the victory over the French fleet and took their INVINCIBLE.

FABLE X.

The ASTROLOGER that tumbled into a Well.

PORING amidſt the ſtar beſpangl'd ſkies,
A fam'd Aſtrologer once fell,
As ſtory goes, into a Well.
Great learned Sir, where were your eyes?
As paſſing by a joker ſaid,
Methinks it was not quite diſcreet,
To ſettle all things over head,
And not to mind your feet.

How many folks, in country and in town,
Neglect their principal affair;
And let, for want of due repair,

A real houſe fall down,
To build a caſtle in the air.

Projectors thus, as 'tis well known,
From old BEN's Alchymiſt to modern quacks,
Are left poor Dupes when money's flown;
All rich in expectation grown,
And not a ſhirt upon their backs.

FABLE XI.

The SATCHELS of FATE.

UNSATISFIED with his own ſtate,
As well 'tis known moſt people are,
A Man ſent up his daily prayer,
And begg'd of JOVE to change his fate.
The god at laſt comply'd with his requeſt;
Within, ſaid he, theſe ſatchels are confin'd
The Deſtinies of all mankind:
Chuſe that which you like beſt.
You ſee them here in rank and order plac'd;
Conſider well, and in the choice you make,
This warning take,
The happieſt portion weighs the leaſt.
And now he rumages the heavenly ſtore,

In hopes to find
A Deſtiny to ſuit his mind;
And be much happier than before.
The firſt on which he lays his hand,
Was that which held ſupreme command,
Full fraught with toil, with cares weigh'd down,
Beneath the ſplendor of a crown;
To ſtrive to lift up ſuch a ſack
Would ſtrain, ſaid he, e'en HECTOR's back;
This bag for me was never meant.
The next he meets is that of Men in power,
Stateſmen, and ſuch as Courts frequent,
Who never taſte a quiet hour;
Nor know the joys of ſweet content.
Hopes of preferment, terrors of diſgrace,
Anxious when *in*, unhappy *out* of place:
This is a weighty load, exclaim'd our man,
There let it lie, and take it up who can.

And now he tries the ſatchels round,
And every one too heavy found.
In each ſtill ſomething was amiſs;
Too much was that, too little this.
Some to their vaſt ambition left a prey,
Others by ſofter paſſions led aſtray,
And ſome unhappy thro' exceſs of bliſs.

At laſt he cry'd, O! now I've got
The very thing I want:
Good JUPITER, this ſatchel grant,
It is the lighteſt; let it be my Lot.
It would be lighter ſtill, the god reply'd,
Was man but wiſe, or could be ſatisfy'd.
It is thy own: the ſame thou hadſt before;
Take it, be thankful, and complain no more.

FABLE XII.

The Two FORTUNE-TELLERS.

HOW oft does Reputation riſe
From chance and mere conceit?
Be but in vogue, the world will nurſe the cheat;
In being new the merit lies,
And not becauſe you're learn'd or wiſe.
'Tis prejudice that governs all mankind.
Examine whence this weakneſs flows: you'll find
The Marvellous to be the ſource.
What's to be done?
Why, let the Folly have its run;
The flood will ebb of courſe.

So far premis'd; now to my Apologue.

A modern Witch of Endor, alias Gypſie,
Alias a Fortune-Teller, was in vogue
As much as ROCK, or WARD, or JAMES,
You'd think the world was mad or typſie,
To ſee ſuch crowds, Lords, Lackeys, Maids and Dames,
Come to enquire, who fail'd who thriv'd,
In love or fortune, bleſt or croſt,
A ſpoon that's miſſing or a ſweet-heart loſt,
A huſband that was too much wived,
A wife that thought him too long-lived,
And miſs impatient for the marriage ſtate,
All to the Gypſie haſte, to know their fate.
Some little cunning, impudence in ſtore,
Dark terms of art, hard words, what would you more?
Made up ſum total of her ſcience.
One truth perchance, amidſt a thouſand lies,
Might

Might ſure ſuffice
To gain the world's reliance;
And ſo it did. The Oracle of old
Knew nothing, to compare to what ſhe told.
Our Pythoneſs in garret liv'd retir'd;
As nearer to the gods the more inſpir'd.
(And that's one reaſon, why
We modern poets dwell ſo high.)
When ſhe had feather'd well her neſt,
She left the higheſt ſtage, took a firſt floor;
No advertiſements now, no name at door,
Her name was up: 'twas needleſs all the reſt.
But here ſhe quite miſtook the caſe;
Her credit fail'd, ſoon as ſhe chang'd her place.

It happ'd another Beldam hired the room,
Decrepid, poor, ſcarce worth a broom;
The ſtick of which

Makes half the eſſence of a witch.
And now in troops the people ſoar
Up to the garret as before.
The garret was the Sybyl's cave;
Good folks, ſaid ſhe, what would you have?
Indeed, indeed, I've no forſight;
Nor can I either read or write.
Come, come, the myſtery impart;
All this is to inhance your art.
In ſhort, like the mock-doctor in the play,
They made her gueſs away;
And ſpite of all that ſhe could ſay,
She every day encreas'd her ſtore,
As much as any Doctor does, or more.
Her dreſs and furniture conſpir'd
To make her ſtill the more admir'd.
A blanket ſkewr'd around her wrinkled hide,
A great black cat by chimney ſide,

The broom-ſtick, as before was ſaid,
Two crippled ſtools and ſomething of a bed;
With other goods much of the ſame import,
Which all proclaim'd the Devil's court.

The dame below had nothing now to do;
She loſt her fame and ſcience too,
When from the garret ſhe withdrew.

So have I ſeen,
Amidſt a throng like theſe,
All tempting with retaining fees,
With oddiſh gate and ſupercilious mein,
A Lawyer buſtle thro' the Hall.
'Tis ſtrange, pray why this ſtir?
They took him for the famous Sir.
Opinion's all.

FABLE XIII.

The LYONESS and the BITCH.

TO

DAVID MALLET, Esq.

WHILST CLIO dictates what her MALLET writes,
And pens to fame brave MALBRO's great exploits;
In humble ſtrains, I paſs my leiſure time
To teach the Birds and Beaſts to ſpeak in rime.
Think not, my Friend, that trivial is my ſcheme,
Great is the ſcope, tho' ſimple be the theme.
The whole creation joins in Nature's ſong;
One general voice, one univerſal tongue.
Ev'n things inanimate no longer mute,
With me approve, condemn, agree, diſpute.

Happy

Happy the Muſe if ſhe can but denote
How Esop thought, and how LA FONTAINE wrote;
Fictions thro' which ſuch morals are convey'd,
Are Virtue's ſmile, and Truth in maſquerade.

Thou, choſen to tranſmit the Hero's name,
Whoſe hand impartial is to ſtamp his fame;
Firm to thyſelf, with no one Party ſide:
So Honour be thy due, as Truth thy guide.
I know who cry, impatient of delay,
When is this mighty piece to ſee the day?
This tedious author ſure will ne'er have done;
We've finiſh'd many a one ſince he begun.
Wrote hiſtories and lives of great men too,
With ſelf-memoirs, and thoſe of lord knows who.
The noble ſtructure which thy hand ſhall raiſe
Muſt ſtand the teſt of time to lateſt days.

To paint ſuch acts, ſo glorious, ſo divine,
The well-wrought page ſhould as the Hero ſhine.
Unlike theſe tranſient writers of a day,
Whoſe muſhroom works ſprout up, and rot away.
Go on, my Friend, your grand deſign purſue,
Deſpiſe the noiſy, babbling, ſcribbling crew;
And let this Fable anſwer them for you.

Thus to a Lyoneſs, one day,
A female Cur was heard to ſay,
Since Beaſts, quoth ſhe, by nature's law,
To multiply were all deſign'd;
Thoſe ſure deſerve the moſt applauſe,
Who moſt encreaſe their kind.
If ſo, your Majeſty has little ſhare.
Who'd be a Queen but once a year to bear?
If that be all thou haſt to boaſt,
The Lyoneſs reply'd,

Not

Not who does beſt, but who does moſt;
I ſcorn ſuch empty pride.
I own, that only once a year I bring;
But then it is a Lyon and a King,
Deſtin'd to rule the foreſts round.
Whilſt thy blind paultry brood,
For no one purpoſe good,
No ſooner ſhall be born, but drown'd.

FABLE XIV.

The Ass and his different MASTERS.

A Gard'ner's Aſs complain'd to Fate,
How hard and wretched was his lot;
Both morn and eve, betimes and late,
For ever ever on the trot.
And why muſt he be ſingled out,
To carry all this garden ſtuff?
Were there not wheel-barrows enough,
And men to trundle them about.
Fate ſeem'd to pity his ſad caſe,
And found him out another place:
For now a Tanner loads his back,
With ſtinking hides, a heavy pack.

Faugh,

Faugh, how they ſmell! they make me heave;
Bray'd out our fribbliſh Jack,
Good Deſtiny, pray by your leave,
'Tis more than mortal Aſs can bear;
Another maſter ſtrait prepare,
Or to my former ſend me back.
I there could turn my head, and pick
A cabbage-leaf, or ſo;
But now no other plant I know,
Except an oaken ſtick.
Fate liſtn'd to his prayer once more,
And to a Coal-man gave him next;
But he prov'd worſe than all before;
Complaints of courſe. When Fate quite vext,
Cry'd out, heigh day! what's here to paſs?
I have more fuſs with this Jack-aſs
Than with a ſcore of Kings.

But

But ſo it is, the ſillieſt things
Still make the greateſt pother;
And all Olympus daily rings
With one fool's prayer or other.

I would not, brethren, mortify your pride:
But ſure in this, mankind with Aſſes ſide.
Such is indeed the nature of the beaſt,
That in whatever ſtation he is plac'd,
He never is, nor will be ſatisfy'd.
Nay, ſhould great Jove read each petition o'er,
And every wiſh'd-for favour grant,
We ſtill ſhould find out ſome freſh want;
And plague him with ten hundred more.

FABLE XV.

The Ass and the LAP-DOG.

TO

DAVID GARRICK, Esq.

THE grateful Muse her tribute brings
To you, her Censor, Judge, and Friend;
Secure of praise, what ere she sings,
If ROCIUS can commend.
O! might the verse, by your example taught,
Add sweetness to the words, and strength to thought.
Let others crowd with Fame, and tell
By what strange magic spell,
Or rather by what heavenly art,
You captivate the mind, and mold the heart.
'Twere vain in me your public worth to scan,

Superior worth, far out of envy's reach,
But let my fondneſs teach
What all the world ſhould learn, the private Man.
Each ſocial Virtue harbours in thy breaſt;
Kind as Compaſſion, and as Honour true---
Frown not --- ſome other time I'll tell the reſt.
I ſpeak of Talents now, and ſpeak to you.

It is in moſt things, as in writing well,
How eaſy to attempt! how difficult t'excel!
Nature alone can her own ſelf adorn;
Art is acquir'd, but Genius muſt be born.
Would each but keep within th'alloted ſphere,
We ſhould not ſee ſo many fools appear;
Who not content with what juſt Heaven beſtows
Behave as did the Aſs, I now expoſe.

An Aſs, tho' grave, not very wiſe you'll find,
Seein

Seeing a Lap-Dog of the ſpritelieſt kind,
Admir'd by all, by all careſt,
Thus to himſelf his thoughts expreſt:
Why muſt this little trifling Cur
Be kiſt by Madam and by Sir,
And I not have a buſs?
Is it becauſe at their commands,
On two, inſtead of four, he ſtands;
That they make all this fuſs?
If that be all there is to do,
I'll ſtrive to curry favour too.
So ſaid, on his hind legs he rear'd,
And ſtretching out his clumſy paw,
Gently to ſtroak his maſter's beard,
He almoſt broke his jaw;
And then to ſhew his parts the more,
By way of ſong, bray'd out a roar.
Hey dey! what's this? a Cudgel, haſte,

And thraſh me well this ſilly beaſt;
Was ere ſuch muſick heard before?
The ſervants came with ſtick in hand,
And quick obey'd their Lord's command.
The Jack-aſs found, by this ſad chance,
It was not his, to ſing or dance.

Follow your bent, if you would move with eaſe;
What ere is forced can never truly pleaſe.
Nature to each points out the proper way:
Who quits the deſtin'd path muſt go aſtray.

Like you my Friend, how very, very few,
Poſſeſs the Talent and the Science too!

FABLE XVI.

PEACE.

AMONGST the Gods a conteſt roſe,
Which put th' Olympus in uproar;
Juſt ſo it happ'ned once before,
When on the banks where Simois flows,
As HOMER ſung in times of yore,
From words their Godſhips came to blows.
When JUPITER aloud exclaim'd,
Where's Peace? are ye not all aſham'd,
Thus to expoſe yourſelves again?
And be the laughing ſtock of Men?
Then ſternly look'd the Heavens around:
But Peace was no where to be found.
Haſte MERCURY, thy wings prepare,
Fly down to earth and ſeek her there.

The God his father's ſummons quick obeys,
Arrives: and firſt the Court ſurveys.
Politeneſs lives amongſt the Great,
And Peace no doubt had there a ſeat.
Such complaiſance ſmil'd in each face,
It needs muſt baſk in every heart:
But here the God miſtook the caſe;
The maſk remov'd, 'twas fraud, 'twas art.
All ready to receive commands,
Embracing, feigning, ſqueezing hands:
As fair and yet as foul as ſin,
All Peace without, all War within.
He next to THEMIS bench his ſteps inclin'd:
Not that he thought within the Hall,
Amidſt the Lawyer's brawl,
The heaven-born fair to find.
He turn'd his eyes to that tremendous ſeat,
Where Juſtice ſits with awful air,

In ſtern Majeſtic ſtate:
But Peace in vain he look'd for there.
Not e'en great HARDWICK, he whoſe guardian Cares
Protect the Orphan from the Harpy's claws,
Whoſe heart as well as hand the ballance bears,
Can quell the clam'rous jarring of the laws.
For Law, like JANUS, has a double face,
And either ſhews, according to the caſe.
For as you find it ſuits you better,
You take the ſenſe, and leave the letter;
Or vice verſa, with as good pretence,
The letter take and leave the ſenſe.
The God was glad to get from hence.
And to the Temples now he goes,
Where far from all the buſy cares of life,
The holy Prieſts ſhould taſte repoſe,
Free from ambition, noiſe and ſtrife.

But no: inſtead of harmony divine,
Beneath Religion's ſacred veil,
'Twas int'reſt, guile, miſtaken Zeal;
All ſide in parties and in Sects combine,
Some for their Idol, others for their ſhrine;
And curſe and damn and plunge in brother's blood,
For what perhaps few underſtood.
And now JOVE's meſſenger directs his way,
To thoſe fam'd Domes cloſe by where Iſis glides,
Where Alma Mater bears the ſway,
And all the Muſes ſport and play,
And little do beſides.
Peace might with learning dwell, tho' not with wit
But here again the God was bit.
Pride, faction, jealouſy and ſpite,
Were center'd their as in a Fort:
Not for each other to ſupport,
But what is ſtrange! to fight.

Hence

Hence pamphleteers and daily writers,
Some bare-fac'd Liars, ſome back-biters,
And all the mercenary ſet,
That write to live on what they get.
Not that I ſay there's any ſhame,
To write for bread as well as fame;
But oh! beware, nor proſtitute an art,
Deſign'd to mend and not corrupt the heart.
Now into private life the God deſcends;
And firſt he views the marriage ſtate,
Alas! where ſeldom Peace attends:
For two that love there's ten that hate.
Here huſbands nominal, there maiden wives,
Who ſue for a divorce,
Of courſe;
And ſome who plague each other all their lives.
Relations more or leſs divided,
According as by int'reſt guided.

Ungrate-

Ungrateful children, Parents too ſevere---
In ſhort, 'twas Diſcord every where.

I've made, quoth MERCURY, a fine look out;
To father JOVE, what meſſage ſhall I bring?
So ſaid, he turn'd about,
And back to heaven prepar'd to wing,
When as he caſt his eyes around,
Cloſe by a Hermit's cell, he ſpy'd
The beauteous fugitive, with olive crown'd,
And Contemplation by her ſide.
Oh! oh! fair Maid, at laſt you're found:---
Yes, Peace reply'd, 'tis here I dwell,
Within this Hermit's tranquil cell.
For Gods, as well as Men, muſt own
Who'd quiet live, muſt live alone;
Nor happy then, unleſs he find
Within himſelf ſweet Peace of mind.

FABLE

FABLE XVII.

DEATH and the DYING MAN.

A DYING man, full ninety-eight*,
Saw death approaching with his ghaſtly mein:
Good Gods! he cry'd, what's this? a ſprite!
Or elſe ſome thief I ween,
That comes to rob me in the night.
Not ſo: the ſkeleton reply'd,
I only come to aſk my Due;
Your father, grand-father, and his fore-father too,

* THEOPHRASTUS thought it extreamly hard to die at ninety, and to go out of the world when he had juſt learned how to live in it. His maſter ARISTOTLE found fault with nature for treating Man in this reſpect worſe than ſeveral animals: both, ſays Lord BOLINGBROKE, very unphiloſophically.
St. JEROME aſſerts, that he died at 107; but THEOPHRASTUS himſelf mentions that he undertook to write his Characters at ninety-nine.

All

All dyed,
And pray why muſt not you?
Indeed 'tis very true;
But yet I did not think to die ſo ſoon.
" Why muſt my morning ſun go down at noon
I have a thouſand things to do:
Some trees to plant, ſoon as the ſeaſon's wet;
And then my grandſon is not ſettled yet.
Thus without warning to be call'd away!
'Tis very hard. And then my loving wife,
To loſe the comfort of her life;
I know her tender heart will burſt,
If I go firſt;
For her dear ſake a little longer ſtay.
Beſides, I have not made my will;
At leaſt there wants a Codicil---

I gave no warning, doſt thou ſay?

Return

Return'd the tyrant grim:
Do not thy ſenſes all decay?
Thy hearing fail, thy eyes grow dim?
Haſt thou without an ake a ſingle limb?
Weak are thy feet, and weaker ſtill thy head;
Thou art, as one may ſay, already dead.
Are not theſe warnings of approaching Fate?
Canſt thou name in ten thouſand, three,
For whom I've waited as I have for thee?
But haſte, I have not time to prate.
'Tis of no moment to the ſtate,
Whether to morrow or to day you go;
Teſtate, inteſtate, aye or no.
No wiſe man bids the ſtage-coach wait;
His bundle's always ready:
So when Death calls, he takes his ſeat,
Prepar'd, reſolv'd and ſteady.

For what avail the pro and con?
To go juſt now, or elſe anon?
Our days may prove or ſhort or long:
But go we muſt,
And duſt to duſt,
Is ſtill the burthen of the ſong.

FABLE XVIII.

DEATH and the WOODMAN.

A POOR old woodman trudg'd along the road,
Bending beneath the double load,
Of faggots and of age. Alas! he cry'd,
Is there like me a wretch beſide,
In all the country round?
Quite ſpent, and almoſt out of breath,
He throws his burthen on the ground,
Bemoan'd his fate, and call'd on Death.
Come Death, O come, and end my pain---
Death came: and aſk'd, what would you have of me?
Only, that you would be ſo kind, ſaid he,
To help me with my bundle up again.

I am not of MECENAS' mind;
Who ſays, Let me be maim'd and impotent,
An object to my bed confin'd;
Let gout and gravel rack and grind;
So I but live, I'll live content *.

Can there be joy in honours or in wealth,
Or life be worth our care, unbleſt with health?

* Debilem facito manu
Debilem pede coxa:
Tuber adſtrue gibberum,
Lubricos quate Dentes.
Vita dum ſupereſt, bene eſt.
Hanc mihi vel acuta
Si ſedeam cruce, ſuſtine.

Theſe verſes of MECENAS have been tranſmitted down to us by SENECA. Epiſt. 101.

LA FONTAINE admires this ſentiment of MECENAS, but I cannot here agree with my Maſter.

FABLE XIX.

The ANT and the GRASSHOPPER.

A Graſshopper had chaunted it away,
Each ſummer's day;
Now that cold weather was ſat in,
Began to look moſt piteous thin.
Away ſhe hopp'd, to ſee her neighbour th'Ant:
And begg'd ſome ſmall relief, ſhe'd grant
From her abundant ſtore;
Or elſe ere half the Winter ore,
She needs muſt die for want:
And faith and troth, ſhe ſwore
The loan with int'reſt to reſtore,
By Autumn next, if not before.
Your Ants they never lend on truſt.

Our huſwife was devout as well as juſt;
T' encourage ſloth ſhe held a crime.
How did you ſpend, quoth ſhe, the harveſt time
And pleaſe you, night and day I tun'd my Song,
T' amuſe the travellers that paſs'd along.
Oh oh! and ſo you ſung the Summer out?
Yes Ma'am. Why that was wond'rous wiſe:
And now that Winter's come, might I adviſe,
E'en dance about.
You'll have at leaſt, this comfort for't,
To 've led a merry life, tho' ſhort.

FABLE XX.

The CROW and the FOX.

UP in a tree, a Crow had got
A cheeſe or cake, no matter what;
When Maſter Fox allur'd by ſmell or ſmoke,
Firſt lick'd his chops, then thus he ſpoke:

Good morrow, Maſter Crow,
How fine you are! a very Beau!
Dear me, if I'm not quite in love:
Well, if the warble of your throat
Anſwers the beauty of your coat,
You are the Phœnix of the grove.
The Crow thus tickl'd, needs muſt prove
His great harmonious ſkill:

And opening wide his bill,
Of courſe, the prey let go;
Which Reynard catch'd below,
And thus adviſ'd the bird above:

Mark well the leſſon which I give.
All Sycophants expect to live
On thoſe they flatter; henceforth caution take.
The counſel's good no doubt, and worth your cake
Adieu. The Crow aſham'd and griev'd,
Curſing his fate
Swore, but too late,
He never more ſhould be deceiv'd.

FABLE XXI.

The FROG and the OX.

A FROG beheld with envious eyes
An Ox of ſtately mein and ſize;
And tho' no larger than a fig,
She needs would make herſelf as big,
And ſo ſhe puff'd, and ſwell'd away;
Then cry'd, look ſiſter, tell me pray,
Am I not now as huge as him?
Not you. Nor now? No: what ſtrange whim
Induces you to be ſo vain?
You are no more than as at firſt.
Well, I'm reſolv'd I'll try again;
So ſwell'd and bloated, 'till ſhe burſt.

With ſuch mad folks the world abounds;
All will above themſelves encroach:
Each Country Squire muſt have his hounds;
Each City Dame her coach.

FABLE XXII.

The Cock, the Cat, and the Young Mouse.

A Little Mouſe as o'er the hen-yard running,
Was one day very near being nabb'd;
But he eſcap'd more by good luck than cunning:
And to his Dam thus his imprudence blab'd.

I had already reach'd the fartheſt gate,
That ſhuts in this immenſe domain;
With novelty allur'd, with joy elate,
I thought to traverſe all the plain.
When there appear'd before my ſight,
Two Creatures that were different quite.

One ſeem'd good natur'd, affable and mild;
The other noiſy, turbulent and wild;
A creſt of bloody fleſh upon his head,
A haughty look, a ſtrutting tread,
And arms that flap'd as if he meant to fly.
Now 'twas a Cock, our youngſter painted thus,
Like ſome ſtrange animal imported new,
Such at the Tower or Charing-croſs we view,
For which we human mouſelings make ſuch fuſs.
Our Novice then continued ſtill,
O mother! had you heard the noiſe he made
So loud, ſo ſhocking, and ſo ſhrill,
You might have quak'd, but I was not afraid;
'Tis better far, I've heard you ſay,
To act with coolneſs than with heat:
So tho' I ſcorn'd to run away,
I thought it prudent to retreat.
Curſe on the ſpit-fire's clam'rous throat,

Had

Had he with better manners acted,
I ſhould a friendſhip have contracted
With th' other creature in a tabby coat;
So ſoft, ſo ſleek, ſo gentle, ſo demure,
I'm ſure
It muſt be ſomebody of note.
Ah child! reply'd the mother mouſe,
That ſmooth-fac'd hypocrite whom you admire
Is call'd a Cat; ſworn foe to all our houſe.
He eat your Granddame and Grandſire,
And eke your father too;
And had he but his heart's deſire,
He'd eat both me and you.
As for the Cock, who kept you in ſuch awe,
He never knew what 'twas a mouſe to taſte;
But very likely we on him may feaſt,
And have his bones to gnaw.
And as to Puſs, that ſaint-like ſinner,

Could

Could he on you have laid his paw,
You'd been a tit bit for his dinner.

So bleſs your ſtars you was not in his reach,
And ne'er forget the maxim which I teach,
But mark it in your memorandum book,
" Never to judge of people by their look."

FABLE XXIII.

The TWO DOVES.

TWO Ring-Doves, rear'd in the ſame neſt,
Grew up to bird's eſtate; and liv'd at eaſe
With ſtore of peaſe
And real friendſhip bleſt.
Pleaſure may pall for want of change:
One of our Cooers found it ſo;
And needs about the world muſt range,
To ſtudy birds and things and all the reſt.
Unkind, the other cry'd, and will you go?
And leave your friend alone,
Your abſence and your love to moan,
Or what is much the ſame, perhaps your death?
Is this a time to ramble lord knows where?

O ſtay, 'till gentle Zephyr's breath
With ſpring returning warms the air.
Ah! who ſhall tell me how my brother fares?
Has he good lodgings and freſh tares?
Laſt night I heard the raven croak;
O! I ſhall dream of nought but kites and ſnare
Vain were his ſighs, and vain his prayers,
The journey was not to be broke.
My deareſt friend, this weakneſs hide,
The roving bird reply'd,
Three days at moſt, I ſhall be back again.
What are three days? three years to one in pain.
But 'twill amuſe you ſo to hear me tell
What happ'ned here, what there befell;
You'll think you travell'd with me all the way;
Who ſees but little can't have much to ſay.
Had ſage ULYSSES never rang'd of old,
How many ſtories had been left untold!

Goo

Good by my Dear, my Dear adieu;
So ſaid, away he flew.
When lo! a ſtorm of rain and wind
Came bluſtering on, no ſhelter could he find
To thruſt his head: at laſt, with much ado,
Soak'd almoſt thro' and thro',
He reach'd a clump of leafleſs trees;
There ſhivering perch'd, 'till by degrees
The weather clear'd: and now ſcarce dry'd,
And almoſt ſtarv'd, ſets out again:
When in a field he ſpied
A pidgeon near ſome ſcatter'd grain.
There as ill follows ill
He fell into a fowler's ſnare.
The net indeed was worſe for wear;
So what with claws and what with bill,
He made a ſhift his bonds to tear.
Some feathers ſtay'd behind

Beſides his tail.
And now a vulture eyes him in the wind,
With packthread ſcraps entwin'd,
Juſt like a thief broke out of jail;
And now he ſtoops to ſtrike the half-ſtrip't prey:
But in that inſtant, from above
Th' imperial bird of Jove
Wing'd fierce his rapid way;
Whence ſtrait enſued a bloody fray.
But whilſt the high-air thieving birds
Were pouncing thus each other,
The Dove made ſure of one: and without words
Stole off, in hopes to meet his brother.
Vain hopes! his troubles were not over.
A ſchool-boy who perceiv'd our rover
(That age no pity knows;
For ſchool-boys, both in mood and tenſe,
Of miſchief are the quinteſſence,)

With all his might a pebble throws,
Which gave our traveller ſuch a hit,
As near unhing'd his frame.
And now the wretch half-wing'd, quite lame,
Curſing his curious fit,
Went hobbling, limping, full of pain,
And without further woes got home again.

My fate perhaps may prove the ſame.
The Man who writes,
And ventures out in queſt of Fame,
May meet with worſe than ſchool-boys or than kites;
For what are theirs to Critics canker'd bites?
Waft me, ye Muſes, back from whence I came:
Why did I liſten to your lure?
Why riſk that peace which was ſecure?
And all for what? a Name.

FABLE

FABLE XXIV.

The MOUNTAIN in Labour.

A Mountain was in labour once, 'tis ſaid,
And made a noiſe ſo horrid and ſo loud,
As drew from far and near th' aſtoniſh'd crowd,
To ſee her brought to bed.
Expecting all that from her womb ſhe'd caſt
Somewhat more monſtrous than the Manſion-houſe.
And what came forth at laſt?
A Mouſe.
Thus 'tis with ſome new book; the title-page
Teems with the wonders of the age;
But dip into it, and you'll find
A tiſſue pincuſhion with chaff full ſtuff'd;
Or ſay it is a bladder puff'd
With wind.

FABLE XXV.

The PLOUGH-SHARE and the SWORD.

A Sword, as ſtalking round the fields, one day
Met with an honeſt Plough-ſhare in his way.
God ſpeed you, ſaid the Sock, I hope you're well;
That's more than I may chuſe to tell;
The haughty Blade reply'd,
With equal ſurlyneſs and pride;
How dare you aſk your betters how they do?
Diſtance and ſilence ſhew reſpect;
And 'tis what we great Folks expect
From country puts like you.
Pardon, my Lord, for this neglect,
The Plough-ſhare anſwer'd with a ſneer,
Another time ne'er fear,

I'll pay whatever honours are your due.
But pray, where do your grand perfections lie,
That you ſo lofty rear your creſt?
Mankind by me are truly bleſt;
'Tis I beſtow the comforts they enjoy,
Comforts, which you alas! too oft deſtroy;
More modeſty, methinks, would ſuit you beſt.
Thou miſcreant vile, low dirty drudge,
Of heroes acts who made thee judge?
Reſum'd the Sword with high diſdain.
Imperial Rome had been a village ſtill,
Had ſhe confin'd her ſons to plough and till,
And nothing reap'd but grain.
Happy for all mankind beſide,
Had ſhe been but ſo well employ'd;
Reſum'd the Sock again.
How many conquerors, ere now,
Have left the camp to re-aſſume the plough?

AUGUSTUS never had been ſtil'd
The father of his country, great and good,
But for his Reign ſo peaceful, and ſo mild,
Which made the world forget it roſe in blood.

The Sword had nothing more to ſay:
Yet thought it ſhameful to give way.
Therefore, as uſual in ſuch plight,
He bully-like began a fray,
And challeng'd his antagoniſt to fight.
But firſt an oath or two he ſwore.
At which the Plough-ſhare ſmil'd, and ſaid,
I ne'er was to a Duel call'd before;
Nor will I anſwer it on any ſcore.
Not that I am, good Captain BLUFF, afraid,
But working's mine, and fighting's your trade.
Howe'er, to clear this point before we part,
Let us ſome third impartial perſon find

To judge our caſe. With all my heart;
And yonder's one juſt to our mind,
A Mole that ſits near the hedge ſide;
She is the fitteſt to decide:
Juſtice, you know, is painted blind.
Each pleaded as he could his cauſe,
And quoted cuſtoms, cited laws.
After Oyes, and all was ſtill,
The Mole, without or hums or haws,
Pronounc'd this ſentence from her hill:

In that bleſt age of yore, the golden times,
When all was common 'mongſt the ſons of Men
They had no laws, becauſe they knew no crimes
And juſtice only bore her ballance then.

But in ſucceeding days, when mine and thine
Crep't in the world with all their wrangling train

Th

The Sword was order'd, by the Powers divine,
To guard th' oppreſt; th' oppreſſor to reſtrain.

In vain the Farmer tills, manures and ſows,
In vain his fields a yellow harveſt wear,
He often labours but to feed the Foes,
If not protected by the Soldier's care.

Then aid each other, or you'll fare the worſe;
The Sock the ſubject, and the Sword the king,
The crime is in th' abuſe, and not the thing;
The greateſt bleſſing or the greateſt curſe.

FABLE XXVI.

MERCURY and the SHADES.

To Miſs M * *

CHARMING ANNETTA, but that I'm forbid
Fain would I grace theſe Fables with your
name;
But in each praiſe I ſure may echo fame,
And then you're finely hid.
Yet hold: nor let the bluſhes riſe
Nor Anger ſparkle in thoſe eyes
Where Love has fixt his throne.
But wherefore do I pardon aſk?
Remember you impos'd the taſk;
This Fable is your own.

Th

The meſſenger of JOVE, as 'twas his poſt,
Led to the Stygian coaſt,
Four ſhades departed from this life;
A maiden fair juſt going to be married,
A good man torn from children and from wife,
A general that ne'er in fight miſcarried,
And to compleat the motley crew,
A poet, who had bid the ſtage adieu.
Alas! the virgin ſhade then cry'd,
Where is, ah where! my lover now?
I'm ſure with me he would have died,
Had he but known the manner how:
For when alive, on love relying,
He claſp'd me to his tender breaſt,
And talk'd of nothing elſe but dying;
Now I am gone, where can he reſt?
If Death flies not to his relief,
'Tis plain one cannot die of grief.

And next the married man
His piteous tale began:
Ah me!
Said he,
What ſighs are fetch'd! what tears are ſhed!
Since I am number'd with the dead;
Oh did they but regret me leſs!
My loving and beloved wife,
My children dearer far than life,
My only ſorrow, I confeſs,
Is to reflect on their diſtreſs.
What ſignifies your petty private ſmart?
Then ſpoke the hero, with a frown;
The public feels my loſs in every heart,
And with their tears write my renown.
Each in the general woe aſſumes a part,
Whilſt ROUBILLAC employs his art
To raiſe himſelf, and to tranſmit me down.

With weak materials, ſaid the Bard,
You build your future fame:
No doubt but bronze is very hard
And marble much the ſame.
Yet marble moulders, braſs decays;
There's nothing but the poet's lays
Can fix the hero's name.
Had HOMER never wrote,
ACHILLES never had been known;
And as our brother VOLTAIRE ſays,
MALBRO' will live in ADDISON,
When Blenheim and the Pillar's gone.
I don't preſume myſelf to quote;
Tho' to be ſure moſt folks muſt own
Amongſt the beſt I was of note.

The god could not forbear to ſmile,
To hear their conſcious prate,

And ſo indulg'd them for a while,
Each in his fond conceit.
But being near th' infernal gate,
He wav'd his wand aloft in air,
And firſt beſpoke the maiden fair.
For you, ſweet ſhade, that think your lover dying,
Already in his arms another is complying.
And thou, poor ſoul, uxorious ghoſt,
What haſt thou to regret or boaſt?
Thy wife and heirs are gone to law;
For in thy will was found a flaw,
Intent on nothing but thy ſtore,
They count, recount it ore and ore,
And curſe thee for not leaving more.
And you my noble man of might,
So fam'd for ſpoils, ſo great in fight,
Once gone, you are of no import;
Another has your place at court,

Much

Much greater far than all that went before.
You was, as one may ſay,
Like him the hero of the day,
Like you when ſnatch'd away,
His feats and name will be no more.
You maſter poet thank the doctor's pill,
That ſav'd you from the public ſcoff:
You was a going faſt down hill;
'Twas high time to leave off.

All think themſelves of more importance far,
Than really what they are.
We every day experience what we dread;
Forgot when abſent, as forgot when dead.
None thought of us before that we had breath;
And few will be remember'd after death;
Except thoſe few who live to fame,
Death and oblivion are the ſame.

FABLE

FABLE XXVII.

LOVE and DEATH.

CUPID and Death, by JUPITER's command,
To hunt together took their way;
With quiver on their back and bow in hand,
The World the chace, and Humankind the prey.
At all the old decrepit crew,
Who nothing seem'd with life to do,
The tyrant grim his shaft let fly;
And at each youthful tender heart,
The Son of VENUS launc'd his dart,
To give mankind a fresh supply.
I'll furnish Cloto's distaff with good stuff,
Quoth CUPID with a wanton smile;
I'll give, said Death, her Sister work enough,

Her

Her ſciſſars ſhan't lie ſtill the while.

So ſettled, on they went; and as one day,
Within the ſhade our travellers ſat,
To reſt their limbs, as 'tis the way,
And eat a bit and chat;
An accident it ſeems befel.
Their arrows lay upon the ground,
But by what chance all mix'd were found,
Imports not much to know or tell:
Our Archers took them up pell-mell,
And tho' unlike, in point and feather,
Heedleſs they jumbled all together.
Hence Death would oft the young ones kill;
And Love the old with paſſions fill.
Jove ſmil'd, and ſaid, by this miſtake,
Man may, if wiſe, advantage make;
I'll leave it to his own free will.

Who fears th' attack ſhould be on guard;
In youth he may be ſnatch'd away;
In age by folly led aſtray;
For Love and Death pay no regard.

Without this check, in every ſtation,
T' alarm at once both young and old,
Virtue would have no occupation,
And Vice would triumph uncontrol'd.

FABLE XXVIII.

The BAT and the Two WEASELS.

A Heedleſs Bat that flicker'd round about,
Miſtook his way into a Weaſel's houſe;
Bleſs me! what's this? by heavens a mouſe!
Exclaim'd the Dame with piqued ſnout.
How durſt you come within my door?
I hate a mouſe, your death is ſure.
A mouſe, d'you ſay? the priſoner cry'd,
Was ere poor creature ſo bely'd?
I'm none of thoſe ſad wicked things;
For thank my ſtars, you ſee I've wings.
A Bird I am, a real bird I ſay;
If ſtill you doubt I'll fly away.
I ſoon ſhall know, ſaid ſhe, if that be true.

So let him go, and out he flew.
But ſcarce eſcap'd, he falls again
Into another Weaſel's den,
Sworn enemy to all that flies.
Vile bird! and have I catch't thee then?
A bird! what bird! the Bat replies;
Was ever bird yet known without a feather?
My outſide, as you ſee, is nought but leather.
Long live the mice! long live the rats!
And may great JOVE confound the cats.
Thus, by this ready repartee,
A ſecond time he was ſet free.

There's many a one who change their note,
Juſt like this Bat, that's in our ſtory;
Who as times go ſtill turn their coat,
One day a Whig, the next a Tory.

FABLE XXIX.

The Two Books.

A Modern Book, freſh guilt and neatly bound,
Caſt his unmeaning eyes around;
And full of nothing but himſelf
Deſpis'd each other on the ſhelf.
A Manuſcript, in tatter'd parchment dreſt,
By chance was rang'd cloſe by his ſide;
When thus the gilded Calf expreſs'd
His emptyneſs and pride:
You, Bibliopoliſt, why am I diſgrac'd,
Near ſuch a wretched creature to be plac'd?
Ladies and Lords ſhould have diſtinguiſh'd benches,
And not be plac'd with fellows and with wenches:
Methinks you might have had more ſenſe.

Faugh! how he ſmells of Poverty and Muſt!
Take him away, or bear me hence;
Am I fit company for worms and duſt?
You need not carry it ſo high;
Our Ancient made reply,
You have your worth, and I have mine;
I own I am not near ſo fine:
But thoſe will ſee, who turn us over,
That I'm a Book, and you're a cover.
A ſcholar came into the ſhop,
Who to their quarrel put a ſtop.
He ſoon diſtinguiſh'd, as he ought,
The Book of merit from the fop;
The firſt he much admir'd, and bought;
The other ſcorn'd, and ſat at nought;
Good Gods! ſaid he, who bound ſuch ſtuff together?
'Tis ſo much gilding loſt and ſo much leather.

There's

There's many a worthy man of note,
With grief be't ſaid, that wears a ſhabby coat.
And for the gaudy thing we here expoſe,
You think it is ſome Lord; it might be ſo:
But gueſs again. Why, it muſt be a Beau;
For every body knows,
That he is nothing but a ſuit of cloaths.

FABLE XXX.

The CONNOISSEURS.

To Mr. HAYMAN.

POETS and Painters flock together,
In fancy's flight birds of a feather.
Then tell me, HAYMAN, brother in APOLLO,
That god of whim, whom you and I, both follow,
Is not our caſe, who paint or write,
In all reſpects the ſame?
Arraign'd by ignorance, and judg'd by ſpite,
Dubious of praiſe, but ſure of blame.
In every other Science, great or ſmall,
A Jury's call'd of the ſame art and knowledge;
The Surgeon is examin'd at the Hall,

The

The Doctor at the College;
But thoſe who uſe the pencil and the pen,
Submit their works to all degrees of men:
The ſcriv'ner's clerk, the boy who ſweeps the ſhop,
The ſqueamiſh Beau, the maukiſh Fop,
And thouſands more beſide,
Of equal judgment, ſenſe and ſpirit,
Condemn, approve, decide,
And fix the ſtandard of our merit.
But if my Friend will liſten to the Tale,
He'll find their Sentence's not without appeal.

A famous painter, one of thoſe
Whoſe pencil was to nature true,
A HOGARTH you'll ſuppoſe,
But I ſuppoſe 'tis you;
No matter which; one of the two
A Portrait undertook to draw.

Three ſittings o'er,
Perhaps ſome more,
Genius, as yet, is not confin'd by Law.
'Tis done; the picture is expos'd to view.
Friends come to judge, as uſual, in ſuch caſe:
What! don't you know the face?
Not I indeed; do you?
'Tis mine; reply'd the man who ſat:
Impoſſible! here's neither grace nor air,
Why this is brown and you are fair;
I never ſaw a piece ſo flat.
Beſides, the mouth is all aſkew:
And then ſuch ſhades! and then ſuch light!
Pray wipe it out, begin anew;
For as it ſtands 'tis quite a fright.
Our Artiſt pleads his cauſe in vain,
He needs muſt paint it o'er again.
And now they cry out ten times more,

Why

Why this is worſe than that before.
If you would have your Portraits take,
Give us reſemblances that ſtrike;
That ſeem to think, and want to ſpeak;
A RUBENS, TITIAN, or VANDYKE;
But as for this, there's not one feature like.

The Virtuoſi gone, the painter ſaid,
I have a thought, that's juſt come in my head,
T' expoſe theſe learned friends of yours:
Who under name of Connoiſſeurs,
Of ſtrokes and touches, ſtile and manner, chatter.
But be ſo kind to join with me,
And you to-morrow morn ſhall ſee,
How much they know about the matter.

Next day the picture was ſet forth to ſight,
At proper diſtance and in proper light;

Juſt as between them 'twas agreed.
And now the learned meet, to ſpeak their mind;
But ſtill, they can't the leaſt reſemblance find;
'Twas not their friend. Not him indeed.
That's very ſtrange! the Portrait made reply;
Why, Gentlemen! 'tis I myſelf, 'tis I.
For in the cloth a hole was cut,
Thro' which our man his real face had put,
To give theſe Connoiſſeurs the Lie.

Then are there none, whoſe judgment fix the teſt?
With taſte and true diſcernment bleſt,
Whoſe very praiſe rewards the Artiſt's toil?
O yes: no doubt there are.
Sometimes, tho' very rare,
You find a CHESTERFIELD, and meet a BOYLE.

FABLE XXXI.

JUPITER and the FARMER.

'TIS ſaid that JOVE had once a farm to let,
And ſent down MERCURY, his common Crier,
To make the moſt that he could get;
Or ſell it to the higheſt buyer.
To know the premiſes, the people flock'd:
And as 'tis uſual in ſuch caſe,
Began to run them down apace;
The ſoil was poor, the farm ill ſtock'd:
In ſhort, a barren miſerable place,
Scarce worth th' expence to draw a leaſe.
One bolder, tho' not wiſer than the reſt,
Offer'd to pay in ſo much rent,
Provided he had JOVE's conſent

To

To guide the weather, juſt as he thought beſt.
Or wet or dry, or cold or hot,
What e'er he aſk'd ſhould be his lot;
To all which JOVE gave a conſenting Nod.
The Seaſons now obſequeous ſtand,
Quick to obey their lord's command.
And now the Farmer undertakes the God;
Now calls for ſun-ſhine, now for rains,
Diſpells the clouds, the winds reſtrains;
But ſtill confin'd, within his farm alone,
He makes a climate all his own.
For when he ſheds, or when he pours
Refreſhing dews, or ſoaking ſhow'rs,
His Neighbours never ſhare a drop;
So much the better for their crop,
Each glebe a plenteous harveſt yields;
Whilſt our Director ſpoil'd his fields.
Next year he tries a different way;

New molds the Seaſons, and directs again,
But all in vain;
His neighbour's grounds ſtill thrive while his decay.
What does he do in this ſad plight?
For once he acted right.
He to the God his fate bemoan'd,
Aſk'd pardon, and his folly own'd.
Jove, like a tender maſter, fond to ſave,
His weakneſs pitied, and his fault forgave.

Then let us this concluſion draw,
That Providence is an unerring guide;
'Tis Nature's and 'tis Reaſon's law.
I ſaid it once before; by that abide.

FABLE XXXII.

The CAMEL and the FLOATING-TUB.

THE first who e'er a Camel saw,
Took to his heels and scour'd away in haste;
The second dared t' approach; but yet with awe;
The third a bridle forms, and loads the Beast.

By custom every thing familiar grows.
What rais'd at first our wonder and surprise,
When better known, we see with other eyes;
And cannot guess whence our amazement rose.
And thus it happ'd with those,
Who on the seas, an object view'd from far:
They took it for a first rate man of war;

But

But as ſtill nearer came the ſhip,
She dwindled to a fiſhing boat;
And ere ſhe finiſh'd th' other trip,
Was nothing but an empty Tub afloat.

How many like this Tub appear,
At diſtance ſomething, nothing near!

FABLE XXXIII.

The LYON's COURT.

ONE day the Monarch of the Beaſts,
His royal mandate uſher'd out,
That all his ſubjects round about,
Should come and join in games and feaſts;
Intending to keep open court,
To ſhew his ſtate and give them ſport.
His vaſſals all, from far and near,
Their Monarch's ſummons quick obey;
And in his palace ſtrait appear.
A palace did I ſay?
Sure ſuch was never ſeen before;
For if we may on fame rely,
It was a charnel-houſe, a mere hog-ſty,
Where filth and naſtineſs ran o'er.

The

The Bear no ſooner ſmelt the dirty place,
But held his noſe, made a grimace;
Better he had not been ſo nice;
The Lion ſhock'd at his uncourtly face,
Diſpatch'd him in a trice.
The Monkey, who ſaw Bruin bleed,
Began to chatter forth applauſe:
Admir'd the Den, approv'd the deed,
And bleſt the royal claws.
Was ever Bear ſo brute, ſo rough?
Indeed you ſerv'd him right enough:
For me, I needs muſt own,
I never ſmelt ſo ſweet a place;
Great Jove for yours might change his throne,
And think it no diſgrace.
This is too much, the Lion ſaid,
I ſcorn ſuch nauſeous wheedling prate;
The Bear for his brutality, lies dead;

Thou

Thou for thy flattery, ſhall ſhare his fate.
No doubt, this Lion muſt have been
To NERO, or CALIGULA, a-kin;
A mere DRAWCANSIR, one of thoſe
Who neither ſpare their friends nor foes.
Well; what ſays Reynard then? the Monarch cry'd,
By his ſound judgment we'll abide.
Dread mighty Sir, the Fox reply'd,
The honeſt truth I fain would tell,
Whether a ſtench or a perfume?
But I have got ſo great a rheum,
It quite deſtroys my ſmell.

Would you at Court in favour hold,
Be not too fawning, nor yet too ſincere;
And be your Senſes ne'er ſo clear,
'Tis good ſometimes to feign a cold.

FABLE XXXIV.

The KING and the SHEPHERD.

TWO powerful Tyrants ſhare the heart of Man;
And baniſh reaſon from her throne:
Both high and low, their puiſſance own;
Eſcape them if you can.
One is Ambition and the other Love.
'Tis true, Ambition bears the greateſt ſway;
For where he ſtalks e'en Love itſelf gives way:
But that ſome other time I'll prove.
My buſineſs now, is to declare
How once a certain King, who liv'd ſomewhere,
A certain Shepherd call'd to court.
The ſtory's old; Kings in that golden age,
Made it their duty and their ſport,

To ſtrole incog; without a guard or page.
This King then ſaw a prudent Swain,
Whoſe fatt'n'd flocks enrich'd the plain.
Charm'd with his diligence and care,
Leave, ſaid the King, the fields and come with me
Inſtead of Shepherd thou a Judge ſhall be.
Come, and my royal bounty ſhare;
Henceforth the juſt pois'd balance keep:
Paſtor of Men and not of ſheep.
Our Shepherd then is on the bench;
Of Judgment ſound, and clear and ſtrong,
He knew not how the words to wrench,
And make that right which he thought wrong
Good ſenſe ſupply'd his want of art;
In ſhort, as well as moſt he play'd his part.

A Hermit, who his neighbour was before,
At this ſtrange news, haſtes to the palace door;

And thus accoſts his friend;
Am I awake! and is it you?
A Courtier! and a favourite too!
Unconſcious of the perils which impend,
Alas! you little know --- but oh beware!
Nor taſte the gilded bait;
Within there lies a treach'rous ſnare:
Avoid the precipice ere 'tis too late.
But no; he heeds not what I ſay;
Already tainted with th' infectious air,
Advice is vain, and reaſon thrown away.
Methinks, continued ſtill the man devout,
I ſee the poor blind wretch, whoſe whip was loſt:
When groping for it round about,
He in the froſt,
A Serpent found,
Which lay benum'd upon the ground.
Thank heaven, ſaid he, my loſs is now ſupply'd.

He took it for a thong; when ſome one cry'd,
Good Gods! away the reptile caſt,
It is a Serpent, which you hold ſo faſt.
A Serpent, no: it is a whip;
Nor ſhall I in a hurry let it ſlip;
The ſtubborn blind reply'd;
The Creature bit him, and he died.
Ah! ſomething worſe I fear your fate attends.
What's worſe than death? a hundred plagues you'll find,
The Prophet hermit ſaid, deceitful friends,
Vexations, broils, diſguſts of every kind;
And ſo it happ'd. The more upright,
The leſs upon your guard;
And who can ward
The bolts of envy and the darts of ſpite?

The Prince now liſtens to the voice of ſlander;

Farewel our Judge's merit, fame and candour.
Againſt him, all cabal and plot;
Male-practices, unjuſt decrees,
And double fees,
Beſpoke what treaſures he had got.
The King reſolv'd this myſt'ry to unfold,
And went in perſon on the ſpot.
No coſtly goods were there, emboſs'd with gold;
His furniture was very plain;
But decent, neat and clean.
He has, ſaid they, a huge ſtrong box,
With twenty bolts and full as many locks,
Quite cramm'd with Jewels, and ill gotten pelf.
The box is brought: he open'd it himſelf.
Here ended the diſpute;
E'en Calumny ſtood mute,
Abaſh'd, confounded at the view
Of what the coffer held; his crook and flute,

His Shepherd's coat, his pouch and baggpipes too,
Were all the treaſures it contain'd.
Treaſures! much dearer to my ſoul, he cries,
Much dearer far, than all your palace yields;
With them my freedom is regain'd:
They never rais'd nor jealouſies nor lies:
Welcome once more. Away, let's to the fields;
And wake from grandeur paſt, as from a dream.
Pardon, dread Sir, if thus I dare exclaim;
When on the ſummit, I foreſaw my fall,
And now am ſhipwreck't in the port.
But who is he, amongſt you all,
Or great or ſmall,
That can refuſe a place at Court?

FABLE XXXV.

The Two Extreams.

SHipwreck't upon a deſert ſtrand,
Two wretches ſcap'd their watry fate;
To meet misfortunes full as great,
And die for want, on land.
No food their hunger to appeaſe:
Better have periſh'd in the Seas.
Two days were paſt and gone,
When Death came ſtalking on,
Preceded by deſpair;
But in that moment they eſpy'd,
At loweſt ebb of tide,
Some Oyſters opening to the air.
At ſight of ſuch unſeemly food,

One cry'd this cannot ſure be good;
Was ever ſeen ſuch nauſeous fiſh?
As well by hunger, as by poiſon die;
I ſhall not taſte ſuch ſtuff, not I:
So drooping ſinks, and had his wiſh.
The other, ſeeing what befel,
Againſt the food was not ſo bent;
But ſcoops the fiſh from out the ſhell,
Then ſhut his eyes, and down it went.
O what delicious ſavory meat!
Have we not dar'd, quoth he, to eat.
I ſhan't repine upon this ſandy ſhore,
Nor think myſelf by fortune curſt;
For ſure ſuch fare I never eat before!
So ſaid, one after one ſtill gulping more,
At laſt the glutton burſt.

Man ever was, and will be ſuch,

To

To do too little or too much.

In every clime, in every ſtate,
Exceſſes are of human growth;
For let us love, or let us hate,
Reaſon is always blind in both.

FABLE

FABLE XXXVI.

The MISER and his FRIEND.

A Niggard wretch, ſuch as their bellies ſtint,
One, who would ſheer an egg, or ſkin a flint,
Had made a ſhift ſo much to ſcrape,
He knew not where to hide his heap.
'Tis ſaid, that Ignorance is ſiſter twin
To Avarice; I'm ſure they are akin.
Much puzzl'd was our Grub to ſtow his pelf;
If I ſhould leave it in my reach, ſaid he,
Who knows, but I might rob myſelf;
Who ere's the thief, 'tis all the ſame to me.
Ill judging muckworm, ſay, is it then ſtealth
To taſte the bleſſings heaven beſtows?
I tell thee fool, wealth is no longer wealth,

But

But as it comes and goes.
When ere it, unenjoy'd, lies ſtill,
Far from a good, it proves an ill.
And then the pains to get, the cares to keep,
No reſt all day, all night no ſleep:
Deſtroy the comforts which it ſhould afford.
All that may be; but I'll ſecure my hoard,
Thought Gripe: Banker nor Agent will I truſt;
Nor public funds; but yet ſomewhere he muſt
Depoſite all his Joys.
So to a neighbouring Friend he hies;
Where ſhall I place, ſaid he, my life, my ſoul?
Far from the ſight of man, or moon, or ſun?
In the earth's boſom dig a hole.
So ſaid, ſo done.
It happen'd then one day,
Our Grub, as uſual, went to pay
His adorations at the ſhrine

Of

Of ſaint of ſaints, which was his coin;
When to his great ſurprize, the ſaint was flown.
Except my Neighbour, I have truſted none.
Away goes Grub; my friend,
Said he, to-morrow I intend
To add ſome thouſands to the ſtore.
At this good news, the Friend got to the hole,
And plac'd the treaſure as it lay before;
Fully reſolv'd to have the whole.
But Grub was wiſer grown.
No: ſince once more I have the luck,
To be poſſeſſor of my own,
I will enjoy it whilſt I may,
So took his hoard away;
And left the thief quite thunder-ſtruck.

This was indeed a double pleaſure;
To bilk a knave, and ſave his treaſure.

FABLE

FABLE XXXVII.

The PISMIRE and the FLY.

THERE happen'd once a warm diſpute,
Between a Piſmire and a Fly;
Which of them ſtood in beſt repute,
In fair Opinion's eye.
O JUPITER! can you unmov'd ſit by?
The winged inſect cries,
Thou Lord of all the gods, and men, and flies!
O hear! for who but thee ſhall be my Judge?
When ſuch a little, creeping, dirty drudge,
Shall inſolently dare,
Her merit to compare
With mine, who am the daughter of the air,
And thy copartner of the ſkies.

I live in palaces, frequent the great,
With kings at table take my ſeat,
And taſte of every thing the firſt.
Whilſt this low wretch porloins a grain of wheat,
Then drags it home to make a three days treat;
With pain and labour curſt.
But tell me ſweetheart, was it ever known,
That you ſhould perch upon a Monarch's throne?
Or did you ere attempt to grace,
By way of patch, a Fair one's face?
Not you indeed, whilſt I at leiſure,
Careſs her ſnowy breaſt,
And all the charming reſt,
Juſt as it ſooths my pride or pleaſure.
For me, and for the gods, the prieſts prepare
Thoſe victims, which with them I ſhare.
But come, 'tis cruel to go on;
You love to hold forth; now you're free.

Let's have a lecture on good huſwifry.
Haſt thou then done?
The ſubterranean Manager reply'd,
I think my patience has been try'd.
But trifler, brag not of thy merit;
Tell me, next ſeaſon, where thou doſt inherit?
What if thou ſit'ſt on heads of Kings?
A mighty boon indeed to boaſt!
For any comfort that it brings
An Aſs's ear's as good a poſt.
If to the ſacred feaſts thou doſt intrude,
Art thou not ſtill deteſted, and purſu'd?
Where e'er thou art, 'tis a miſhap;
By name of paraſite thou'rt known.
Why was invented the fly-flap?
And whence the word fly-blown?
Infection riſes from thy breath;
And if perchance thou ſteal'ſt a kiſs,

How

How often does the raviſh't bliſs
Occaſion thy untimely death?
Or if a while thou ſhun'ſt thy fate,
How very ſhort's thy longeſt date?
When Phœbus ſhall withdraw, as ſoon he muſt,
Then art thou mingled with the duſt,
Quite ſtarv'd with cold and want.
Whilſt I ſhall take my reſt,
In eaſe and plenty bleſt.
Then prithee who fares beſt,
The Fly or th' Ant?

So get thee gone, with all thy empty ſtate;
Our ſtore-houſes will never fill,
Whilſt I ſtand ſtill,
Amus'd with idle prate.

FABLE XXXVIII.

JUPITER'S LOTTERY.

JOVE once resolv'd a Lottery to make,
And sent his Messenger below,
To let all mortals know,
'Twas chief intended for their sake.
All prizes, and no blanks;
Commissioners, none to be paid,
And no deductions made,
The price of tickets, only thanks.
The lots were plac'd in classes, great and small,
'Twas Int'rest, Learning, Honour, Pleasure,
Ambition, Friendship, Love and Treasure;
Of all the lots, Hope was the least:
That food on which most mortals feast,

And Wiſdom was the greateſt prize of all.
The wheel is brought, the lots are ſhut in;
But yet, this Lott'ry was not juſt confin'd
To benefit alone Mankind:
Some of the Gods had leave to put in.
I'll ſee, ſaid JUPITER, this buſineſs out;
Do you, ASTREA, mind there be no flaw,
Let Fortune turn the wheel about,
And Fate the chances draw.
Number ſix thouſand, nine and ten:
Hope. And what next? why Hope, and Hope again
A better chance came now and then;
A friend in need, that finds a friend;
A man at law, tho' poor, yet gets his right;
A forlorn lover who obtains his end,
And a ſtarv'd Poet ſure of a third night.
Honours and dignities ſome tickets bring;
'Twas now an Alderman, and now a King.

At laſt the greateſt prize, Wiſdom, came out;
And 'twas MINERVA's luck the lot to own.
Which was no ſooner known,
But all Olympus gave a general ſhout.
What! let his daughter have the greateſt ſhare?
Man diſappointed, cry'd, This is not fair;
It is a trick of JOVE's, no doubt.
The God reſolv'd their inſolence to quell:
(He might have ſent them down to hell)
But ſtrait revolving in his head,
A puniſhment as whimſical as ſtrange,
He folly gave in wiſdom's ſtead:
And Man was pleas'd with the exchange.
So ever ſince, ſay, or do what you can,
The greateſt fool thinks he's the wiſeſt Man.

FABLE XXXIX.

The ANIMAL COMEDIANS.

THE Birds and Beaſts, one holy-day,
Would need Comedians turn and act a play;
As 'tis the faſhion grown of late,
Eſpecially amongſt the great.
Suppoſe the ſtage a lawn, or green,
With ſcenes of trees, and flow'rs between.
The Lark and Linnet warbled forth their notes,
After each act, with harmony divine:
And ſwell'd, by turns, their little tuneful throats,
'Till all the feather'd choir in Chorus join.
The Concert, to be ſure, was very fine;
But what delighted every mind and heart,
Was how each Actor ſuited with his part.

The voice, the look, each geſture, every feature,
Were proper to the character they bore.
GARRICK himſelf could not do more;
He might as much, for all was Nature.
Of courſe the Lion repreſents the King;
Majeſtic wig, impoſing nod, loud roar,
So natural, you would have ſwore
He was the very thing.
The Hero's part, the ſtately Bull performs;
Honour and Love, by turns,
His boſom burns:
And now he ſnorts, and rants, and whines, and ſtorms,
A milk white heifer, is the Lady fair,
To whom he makes his fond addreſs;
See how ſhe moves with graceful air,
A Virgin Queen, Infanta, or Princeſs:
Her heart with equal love is full,
Which modeſty forbids her to confeſs;

She ſighs, in petto, for the valiant Bull.
The truſty confidant, the Spaniel plays;
The prowling Wolf, ſome miniſter of ſtate,
Loaded with public ſpoils, and public hate;
The plotting Bear the wilely Fox betrays;
In ſhort, the whole was done with truth, with eaſe

A Monkey, who ſat in the pit,
As Judge ſupreme of ſenſe and wit,
Found fault with each performer in the play;
There was not one that acted right,
For all miſtook their talent quite;
But by their leave, he'd ſhew the way.
So he preſumes each character to top,
And every one miſtakes;
The modeſt maid, a flirt he makes,
The good old King, a ſop.
Then twiſts his limbs, diſtorts his face,

'Twa

'Twas affectation and grimace;
But to be brief, both great and ſmall,
He made them monkeys all.
The yawning Audience, ſoon
Began to hiſs; and with juſt cauſe;
Had he but in the farce play'd the buffoon,
He might have gain'd applauſe.

Nature to each, ſome innate gift beſtows;
According to the ſoil, the ſeed ſhe ſows.
Stick to your talent, if you would excel:
Who every thing attempts, does nothing well.

FABLE XL.

The Fox, the Hedge-Hog, and the Flies.

A Hunted Fox all cover'd o'er with wounds,
By cunning, or by chance, got from the hounds;
No ſooner free from one miſhap,
But Reyard in another lies;
Not able from the ditch to riſe,
Nor ſtrength his tail to flap,
He was eat up alive, by flies.
O Jupiter! he cries,
Was I reſerv'd for ſuch a fate?
Why did you form the good, the great,
The honeſt and the wiſe?

If

If thus, after a life of virtues paſt,
We muſt by Vermin be eat up at laſt.

A Hedge-Hog witneſs to his grief;
Promis'd to bring him ſure relief;
Soon ſhould he ſee his foes in one dead heap.
I'll roll myſelf into a ball,
And with my prickles ſpit them all,
There ſhan't a ſingle fly eſcape.
No friend, reply'd the Fox, it is in vain,
That would be only to encreaſe my pain:
I to my fate ſubmit per force;
When they are full, they'll drop of courſe.
For ſhould you every inſect ſlay,
Another ſwarm ere ſet of ſun,
Would ſettle on me as their prey;
The work would ne'er be done.

This

This Apologue, the Stagyrite applies
Not to the brutes alone, but to mankind;
Governors, Leeches, Paraſites and Flies,
Blood-ſuckers all; what difference can you find?

Another tale I'll here relate.
'Tis ſaid, a Miniſter of ſtate,
Like our fam'd Cardinal in HARRY's days,
Had by a thouſand miniſterial ways,
Made ſhift to raiſe
A fortune, as unjuſt as great.
One day, as at his Country ſeat,
He was a laying out ſome grand plantation,
Like all the reſt ſqueez'd from the Nation,
A meſſenger arrived with this import:
That he was then diſmiſt from his high ſtation,
And by his Prince forbid the Court.

Quoth

Quoth he, I'm ſorry for this ſad diſaſter;
I have for years been hoarding pelf;
And now that I had ſerv'd myſelf,
I was a thinking how to ſerve my Maſter.
When as who ere ſupplies my place,
Expecting ſtill the ſame diſgrace,
Will only eat up what remains, the faſter.

FABLE XLI.

The YOUNG WIDOW.

A Huſband given over, lay a dying;
And cloſe by his bed-ſide his wife ſat crying.
O ſtay, ſhe ſaid; and muſt we part?
My ſoul, like thine, is on the wing;
Methinks I feel Death's iron dart;
But oh! 'tis that which wounds thy heart,
That bears to mine the ſting.
Her grief was great, ſo was her moan:
And much to die ſhe ſeem'd inclin'd;
Howe'er, ſhe let him go alone,
And prudently remain'd behind.
A week or ſo, was paſt and gone,
Still ſhe continued weeping on.

When

When to her houſe her father came,
And thus addreſs'd the mournful Dame:
My child, ſaid he, enough of tears you've ſhed;
Think of the living, and forget the dead.
Another ſpouſe ---- don't ſtartle at the word,
Tis but a ſecond, you may have a third.
As ſoon as decency permits,
I have a huſband to propoſe;
Young, handſome, rich, juſt one of thoſe
That's form'd to cure a Widow's fits.
Ah, Sir! is this a father's part?
To wound afreſh a bleeding heart;
Shall I another huſband wed?
Oh no: my only love is dead;
Nor will I other wedding have,
'Till I am bedded in his grave.
The father left her to digeſt
The wiſe and prudent things he ſaid.

He put the huſband in her head,
And time he knew would do the reſt.
The cares of mourning next took place:
To dreſs her grief, and ſuit her face.
'Twas CUPID's thought; for what exceeds
A pretty Widow in her weeds?
And now each looking-glaſs could tell
That black became her vaſtly well.
The ſmiles and graces, that were ſcar'd away,
With all the band of little Loves,
And CYTHEREA's Doves,
Came dropping in each day.
The father, if report ſays true,
Another viſit made, ere mourning over;
I'm glad my Dear, ſaid he, ſo well to find you.
But mention'd not a word of the new lover.
At which ſhe bluſh'd ---- muſt I then, Sir, remind
you;

The thing's too ſerious to be made a joke of;
Where is the huſband, pray, that once you ſpoke of?

Wide is the difference, as you ſee it here,
'Twixt Widow of a day and Widow of a year.

All-lenient Time expands his wings,
Away he flies with human cares;
Then back, full fraught with joy, repairs,
And every balmy comfort brings.

Time checks the mourning huſband's ſighs;
'Tis he congeals the falling tear,
To form the lovely lucid leer,
Which ſparkles in a Widow's eyes.

FABLE

FABLE XLII.

The FAIRY CAP.

A Fairy tale I mean to tell,
A fairy one indeed,
Cries out a critic on full ſpeed;
Pray give it them that learn to ſpell,
And not to ſuch as read.
Hold, Sir, your cenſure for a while:
For really by your ſtile,
We may ſuppoſe,
You're one of thoſe,
That ever ſnarl, and never ſmile.
You'll warn me by and by,
Th' ambitious flight to check;
And not to ſoar ſo very high,

Leſt I fall down, and break my neck.
Say what you will, I do the beſt I can;
And write for every ſtage, from child to man.
If in the paths of awful truth,
I may encourage reſty youth,
It is my chief, but not my only plan.
I have another point in view;
For whilſt I ſtrive the young to teach,
I to the old ones preach;
Tho' ten to one they ſlumber in the pew.
Then let the children gather in their reach,
And take the reſt for you.

The fairies, as their legends go,
Once in a hundred years or ſo,
Depriv'd of their own form and nature,
Are doom'd to thoſe of ſome brute creature;
And whilſt they in that ſtate remain,

Are ſubject both to death and pain.

One of thoſe beings chang'd into a mouſe,
Was by a hungry Cat eſpy'd;
And ſurely by her claws had dy'd,
But for the maſter of the houſe:
Who mov'd to ſee the little trembling prey,
By whim or pity, hooted Puſs away.
For which Grimalkin curs'd him in her mind;
And Mouſe a thouſand bleſſings left behind.

Next morn, the transformation o'er,
The Fairy came in her own ſhape;
And, like a Goddeſs, ſtood before
The Author of her near eſcape.
To you, ſaid ſhe, my life I owe;
You ſnatch'd me from the jaws of fate,
And warded off the dreadful blow.

Say, what will make your bliſs compleat?
You cannot aſk a boon ſo great,
But what with pleaſure I'll beſtow.

I fain, reply'd the man, would know
The ſecret thoughts of humankind;
And force the mouth to ſpeak the mind.
Here take this cap, the Fairy ſaid,
No ſooner put upon thy head,
But thou ſhalt pry in every heart;
Not one ſhall ſpeak the thing he means to ſay:
But all to th' impulſe of the mind give way,
And from their inmoſt ſoul each thought impart.

To try the cap, firſt to his wife he goes;
When round his neck her arms ſhe throws.
(A very fine contraſt was made
'Twixt what ſhe did, and what ſhe ſaid)

O! how I hate thee, heaven knows!
And ſtill repeating her careſſes,
I always hated thee before;
But now I loath thee ten times more,
Since DAMON my fond heart poſſeſſes.
What had a doating fool, like thee,
To do with a young wife, like me?
Haſte Death, and rid me of him ſoon,
Or I ſhan't hold another moon.

The wife unveil'd; he takes his ſons to taſk:
Who on their knees his bleſſing feign to aſk;
But tell him, it was time above to go;
And leave them, to enjoy his wealth, below.

And now each perſon that he meets,
With ſcoff or ſneer, his preſence greets.
Should he to ſome old friend a viſit make,
Pot luck to take,

With ſmiling looks, behaviour civil,
His hand they kindly ſeem to ſhake,
And wiſh th' intruder at the Devil.
But yet, the greateſt ſtroke was ſtill behind,
To mortify his pride and gall his mind.
Our curious man was one of thoſe,
Who ſcribbl'd both in verſe and proſe.
And now he ſhews the Connoiſſeurs his play;
At which, as uſual, all prepar'd to puff:
When thus he heard them ſay,
How could you hammer out ſuch ſtuff?
There's neither ſenſe, nor plot, nor wit;
We'll help to maul it in the pit.
Yet all this while ſtill clapp'd applauſe,
As true to ARISTOTLE's laws.
No: this is more than mortal man can bear;
I well deſerv'd this juſt rebuff.
So whirl'd the cap into the air;

Let thoſe, ſaid he, go pick it up who dare;
I've had enough.

Could I read yours, or you my mind,
Such knowledge might be dearly bought;
'Twas for our happineſs deſign'd,
Man ſhould not know each other's thought.

FABLE XLIII.

The CAT and the RAT.

SIR Triſtram th' owl, my lady Friſk the cat,
Miſs taper Weaſel, and ſquire Nibble rat,
Creatures, tho' different in their kind,
Alike to miſchief were inclin'd.
It chanc'd a ſnare was ſet, one fatal day,
And in it fell the purring Dame;
Who made ſo great a mewl and ſcream
As ſcar'd the Rat from where he lay.
O! help me friend, poor Puſs then cry'd;
For you my fondneſs has been try'd.
indeed, I always lov'd you as my brother.
You are the only rat I ever ſaw,
For whom I ſtretch'd a velvet paw;

And one good turn, you know, deſerves another.
This morning as I went to pray,
(My uſual cuſtom every day)
As all good creatures ought;
Intent on nothing but my prayer,
I fell into the wicked ſnare,
In which you find I'm caught.
Then prithee free me from this net.
By doing ſo what ſhall I get?
Reply'd the rat. Eternal peace I ſwear:
Of teeth, of claws, of all I have diſpoſe.
Beſides, I'll make it my peculiar care,
To guard you ſafe, and eat your foes.
The Owl and Weaſel, you ſo juſtly dread,
Do but command, and ſay they're dead.
What friend ſhall we invite? we'll have a feaſt.
This is fine talk, reſum'd the knawing beaſt,
You take me ſurely for ſome ninny head

But I am not ſo weak, as you ſhall ſee,
To ſet you free;
You're cloſe and faſt, within
The gin;
And there you may remain, for me.
So ſaid, he turn'd about, when he eſpy'd
The Owl and Weaſel rang'd on either ſide.
With dangers thus around beſet,
He choſe the leaſt, and gnaw'd the net.
The Hypocrite was ſcarce releas'd,
When he, who there the gin had plac'd,
Appear'd. Away went puſs and her new friend;
And left the man, his net to mend.

Some few days after, as our ſham devout
Was walking out,
She ſaw the Rat, watchful and ſhy,
Like one who durſt not venture nigh.

My

My friend, said she, why this distrust?
It is unkind, as 'tis unjust;
You know I am your good ally:
And do you think, my dearest creature,
I have forgot the debt I owe?
One thing, reply'd the Rat, I know,
Cats are not famous for good nature;
And that by instinct you're our foe.

And he must be a very fool indeed,
Who trusts to treaties made by force or need.

FABLE XLIV.

The BIRD wounded with an Arrow.

Pierc'd, with a feather'd arrow, thro' the heart,
A Dying Bird thus warbled forth his breath:
Ah me! a Brother's pinions fledge the dart,
That wings me certain death.
This is indeed to ſharpen pain;
When what was meant our ſafety, proves our bane:
But triumph not, vain Man, to hear me groan;
For in my wretched fate, you ſee your own.
The ſons of JAPHET all are curſt,
To lateſt times, as from the firſt;
Each ſhall attack his brother.
Mankind ſhall ere be bent on harms,
And ſtill invent and furniſh arms,
To murder one another.

FABLE

FABLE XLV.

The Dog and the Cat.

A Dog there was, of ſpecial fame,
Of ſpaniel breed, and Larder was his name;
We might have call'd him Pompey, Ceſar, Lion,
But as times go 'tis much the ſame:
No prop he wanted to rely on.
His virtues all ſelf-center'd meet;
Mild, faithful, affable, diſcreet.
Good-natur'd Larder was both here and there.
Would fetch and carry, back and forwards run;
Or hunt the duck, or courſe the hare,
And roaſt them when he'd done.
So much to pleaſe he had at heart,
The Cook ne'er need to call out faſter;

Nor

Nor when about he drew the cart,
With little Miſs or Maſter.
In all the houſe, from high to low,
Our Spaniel could not count a foe;
Except a ſpiteful Cat,
Whoſe friendſhip was like that
Of human-kind: mere outward ſhew.
Larder, in ſome contention for a bone,
Without deſign, the Vixen's ear had tore:
For which a ſecret grudge ſhe bore;
And now reſolves, his life alone
Should for ſo great a crime attone.
Malice, for ever on the watch
An opportunity to catch,
At laſt the moment found.
A favourite Daw that hopp'd around,
By luckleſs chance fell in the way,
Where puſs in wicked ambuſh lay.

Sudden

Sudden ſhe ſeized him by the throat,
And ſtopp'd for e'er his prating note.
Then plac'd the corpſe at Larder's door;
Retires, lies down, and purrs demure.

The miſtreſs of the houſe, no ſooner ſpy'd
Her mangled darling where it lay;
Haſte all to my revenge, ſhe cry'd,
This Villain, Monſter, Murderer ſlay.
'Tis blood alone can blood repay.
With grief the ſervants took the harſh commands,
And on poor Larder lay their violent hands.
Each as he ſtruck a tear let fall,
But that was all.
To friendſhip then, what vain pretence?
Where none ſtood up in his defence.
The Cat indeed came in their head,
Who knows, they ſaid,

But he has ſuffer'd for another's crime!
Reflection now was out of time;
'Twas pity; but it can't be help'd; he's dead.

More harm one Enemy portends,
Than all the good from twenty Friends.

Preſerve me, ye propitious Gods!
From ſecret, nay, from open Foes.
Love often ſlumbers, Friendſhip nods,
But Hatred's eye-lids never cloſe.

FABLE XLVI.

The CONQUEROR and the OLD WOMAN.

A Perſian Monarch, one of thoſe,
Whoſe great ambition knew no bounds;
Some CYRUS, or DARIUS we'll ſuppoſe,
In whom no other vice was found.
If we dare name Ambition ſo,
For ſtill 'tis doubt, whether it be or no.
I have not time at preſent to confute,
So grant the queſtion rather than diſpute.
This Sophi far and wide his conqueſts ſpread;
Full twenty crowns, or more,
Were piled on his anointed head;
And yet with eaſe the weight he bore,
For 'twas his great, and chief delight,

To

To break the yoke his vanquiſh'd ſubjects wore,
And make their burden light.
Attentive to the voice of the diſtreſs'd,
Juſtice and Virtue flouriſh'd in his reign.
When from the confines of his vaſt domain,
A good old Woman who had been oppreſs'd,
Came to the footſtep of his throne,
To have her grievances redreſs'd;
And thus in piteous tragic tone,
His Majeſty addreſs'd.
Encourag'd by your fame, I come from far:
Sir, you're our King, by right of War;
By right of ſubject, I for Juſtice ſue.
I claim it; and you'll grant it; 'tis my due.
My daughter raviſh'd, and my houſe deſtroy'd,
And all by one whom you employ'd,
To act the King, in place of you.
I doubt not but all this is true;

The conſcious Prince reply'd;
But ſo far off, what can I do?
To make my people happy, is my pride;
And yet I cannot every where reſide.
The Sun which all the world ſurrounds,
Shines and enlivens but to certain bounds;
The reſt are dark and cold.
That's argued ill, if I may be ſo bold,
Anſwer'd the Matron to the Sovereign,
'Twas weak to graſp at what you could not hold;
And conquer more than you can govern.

Whilſt o'er the ſea of life, we take our trip,
Kings are by Heaven commiſſion'd to command;
Captains, not owners of the ſhip,
'Tis theirs to ſteer the people ſafe to land:
And when the Bark, with prudence they convey,
We row with pleaſure, and with pride obey.

FABLE XLVII.

The ELECTION.

UPON a King's of Monkey-land's demiſe,
(Monkeys as well as Men muſt die)
The Apes a diet call'd; there to deviſe
Who ſhould the Monarch's place ſupply.
For by the by,
The crown was of th' elective ſort;
And ſo I leave you all to gueſs
What bribes, cabals, and plots at Court:
Juſt as in Poland, neither more nor leſs.
Howe'er, 'twas ſaid, as 'tis the uſual way,
That merit, only, ſhould the ſcepter ſway.
So 'twas reſolv'd, to ſhun diſpute,
An Apple dangling by a ſtring,

Muſt high aloof, from ſome tree ſwing,
And he whoſe teeth ſhould ſnap th' unſteady fruit,
Be ſtrait proclaim'd their King.

To try their ſkill, the candidates prepare.
The trumpet ſounds: and now they vault in air;
A thouſand times bound and rebound,
Yet fruitleſs tumble to the ground.
The Apple, twirl'd by many a blow,
Eludes their jaws and dances to and fro.
A Monkey, clumſier than the reſt,
Who long in vain had try'd his beſt,
Sat himſelf down at the tree root;
Reflecting, that the batter'd fruit
Muſt from the ſtalk at length give way.
And as he judg'd right well,
With open mouth he ey'd the prey,
And catch'd it as it fell.

Long live King Pug: huzza'd aloud,
The Senate and the crowd.
When an old ape gets up, and cries,
Is this the tryal that was meant?
You judge of things like men, by the event.
'Twas chance, not merit, gave the prize.

Hold friend, another ape reply'd,
You quite miſtake the thing:
Activity's the hero's pride;
But Prudence makes the King.

FABLE XLVIII.

The MAN and the SNAKE.

A Country fellow ſeiz'd a Snake.
Vile reptile! have I catch'd thee then?
ſaid he;
I'll do a deed for virtue's ſake,
And rid the world of ſuch a peſt as thee.
The guileful Creature, don't miſtake,
I mean the Serpent, not the Man,
I ſay, the guileful creature thus began:
What have I done that you are ſo diſpleas'd?
What done? O all ye powers! what done---
No matter what: my Anger's rais'd;
Repent, make haſte, thy glaſs is almoſt run.
Symbol of ſin, for miſchief ripe,
Of baſe ingratitude the type,

That baſeſt of all crimes beneath the Sun.
Hold there; the winding creature made reply,
If all Ingrates muſt die,
You then condemn yourſelf; my life's at ſtake,
You may at will or ſpare or take;
But do the worſt you can:
For with my lateſt breath I'll ſpeak,
The Symbol of ingratitude is Man;
And not the Snake.
Who ſhall this grand affair decide?
The Clown reply'd,
For me 'tis all the ſame:
I'm willing to be try'd
At any Court you'll name.
Let's aſk the Cow; by her will you abide?
With all my heart, the Reptile cry'd:
I'll truſt to her decree;
So let her ſpeak her mind, and ſpeak it free.

State you the caſe, was it for this you came?
The Snake is right, pronounc'd the lowing Dame,
Of Man's ingratitude, behold in me
A woeful proof; I who, for Seaſons o'er,
Have nurs'd him with my milky ſtore:
I who renew'd his health by Vice impair'd,
Some little comforts ſure I might have ſhar'd
In the decline of life; but here I'm ty'd
Like an old Beldam to a Stake;
With ſcarce a bare ſufficiency ſupply'd.
Wherefore I do in form conclude,
The Symbol of ingratitude
Is Man, and not the Snake.
Are we to mind this doating fool?
A boy would have been whipt at ſchool,
Had he decided thus; but lo!
Yon comes an Ox, with ſolemn pace and ſlow;
To him let us appeal. Agreed.

The Ox firſt ruminated on the deed,
Then ſnorted, chew'd the cud, and gravely ſpoke;
That from his youth gall'd with the yoke,
He harrow'd up the boſom of the fields,
To force the yellow crops which CERES yields;
For him the toil, for Man the gains.
And what return for all his pains?
Small thanks, and ſtripes enough; and then,
Grown old, and paſt his work, for no one crime
('Twill ſcarce obtain belief)
They ſlaughter him at Chriſtmas time,
To load the dainty board with beef.
Such is the gratitude of Men.
Peace, cry'd the Clown; this heavy drudge
Turns Evidence inſtead of Judge;
To him I do object. We'll lay the caſe
Before this Tree; but here came more diſgrace.
The Tree out-ſtretch'd his hoſpitable arms,

To

To keep ungen'rous Man from harms;
In ſtorms to ſhelter, and in heat to ſhade:
Producing, as each Seaſon ſuits,
Flowers in the ſpring, in autumn fruits.
And how am I repaid?
My branches lop't,
And head quite crop't,
At laſt, ſome Country Clown,
By the Squire's orders, cuts me down.

Convicted thus, the Man cry'd out enough:
This babbler is the worſt of all;
I am too good to liſten to ſuch ſtuff.
So daſh'd the Snake againſt the wall.

Thus 'tis amongſt the Great;
They take it in their heads, that Fate
Has made the world for them alone.

Your two legg'd, four legg'd Creatures, Snakes and all,
Great, middle-ſiz'd, and ſmall,
Muſt bend beneath their throne.
Should they affirm that day is night,
And you attempt to ſet them right,
Why, you're a fool: or ſomething worſe.
They never are nor can be in the wrong.
How then avoid their curſe?
Speak low; or hold your tongue.

FABLE XLIX.

The WOLF and the SHEPHERDS.

A Wolf humane, if any ſuch there be,
One day, reflecting on the cruelty
He practis'd now and then,
Not by his choice, but thro' neceſſity.
Wretch that I am! ſaid he,
Purſu'd, deteſted both by Dogs and Men.
Where e'er I paſs ſtill deſolation ſpreads:
Perpetual object of the public ſpite,
From England we were rooted quite;
Rewards were offer'd for our heads.
Nor was there ſcarce a country Squire,
But what employ'd the Village crier,
To ſatisfy the common hate;

'Til

'Till each barn door ſtruck full, like Temple gate,
Attracted every eye, and ſpoke our fate.
And why this ſtrange hubbub? forſooth!
A rotten ſheep, or mangy dog,
Some lean jack-aſs, or dirty hog,
In which I ſat my tooth.
O! 'tis too much to bear; here ends the ſtrife;
Nothing henceforth I'll taſte that has had life.
Why ſhould we longer fret and pine?
Come, let us feed on roots, on graſs,
Nay, ſooner ſtarve; for what is death? alas!
'Tis life, to ſuch a life as mine.
So ſaid, our new converted Sinner
Began to graze; when in the ſhade, he ſpy'd
Some Shepherds, juſt ſat down to dinner.
O all ye Powers! what do I ſee? he cry'd,
A roaſted lamb, hot from the ſpit!
And I half ſtarv'd not have a bit.

Scruples

Scruples avaunt; I give you to the wind:
It is but juſt to ſhare and ſhare;
And ſo they ſoon ſhall find.
And mark, tremendous Gods, the oath I ſwear;
By hunger paſt, and hopes of future fare,
Whene'er it haps to be my lot,
The milky Ewe, the rampant Ram,
And little ſucking Lamb,
Spite of the Shepherds watchful care,
Shall all go down as ſoon as got,
Without or ſpit or pot.

Mankind on herbs and acorns liv'd of old;
But that was in the age of gold.
Things are much alter'd in theſe Iron times;
For Man carnivorous no ſooner grew,
Away both temperance and virtue flew.
So ere you tax the Wolves with crimes,

Think

Think on th' example which you give;
For Brutes, as well as Men, muſt live.

Blame not, ye Shepherds, then the beaſt;
The Wolf is never in the wrong,
But when your Maſtives are too ſtrong.
Why muſt he faſt, whilſt you think fit to feaſt?

FABLE.

The ENCHANTRESS.

'TWAS midnight hour;
When in the center of a loneſome wood
A haggard witch, embru'd in Infant's blood,
Thought fit t' exert her magic power.
The words are ſpoke, the circle trac'd,
The vervain on the altar plac'd;
Amidſt the flocks ſhe blows the baleful breath,
And all around ſpreads peſtilence and death.
Her powerful ſpells both earth and heaven own,
And PLUTO trembles on th' infernal throne.
Forc'd from her orb the moon deſcends the ſkies;
From hell's deep gulph a thouſand fiends ariſe;
All round about the altar ſtand,

Expectant

Expectant of the dire command.
A horrid ſilence reign'd: when thus the Witch.
I've call'd you from above, and from below,
That you may tell me, if you know,
Where I may find my favourite bitch.
Was it for this? old HECATE cry'd,
That thou has turn'd the moon aſide,
And ſtopp'd the courſe of Nature?
What's moon to me? the Hag reply'd,
Or all the world beſide?
If I have loſt my pretty creature.

How many Ladies! I could name,
Would for a lap-dog do the ſame.
But hold: a greater moral is in view.
When Kings and Lords their will purſue
Who ſhall the torrent ſtem?
It may indeed be grief to you,

Ye poor ignoble croaking crew;
But what of that? 'tis mirth to them.

Thus ALEXANDER, as we find,
Only to waſte the tedious day,
The lives of thouſands ſports away:
And to kill time enſlaves mankind.

FABLE LI.

The KITE and the NIGHTINGALE.

A KITE, whoſe daily food was pillage,
As great a thief as any left unſhot,
Had juſt been hooted from the village,
Where he had nothing got.
He put the hen-yard in a ſtrange uproar:
But having miſt his aim was on the ſoar,
To look out ſharp for more.
When oh! a Nightingale fell in his way;
And ſoon he pounc'd the trembling prey.
O ſpare me, cry'd the Herald of the Spring,
Of wicked *Tereus* you ſhall hear me ſing;
I am all voice, and nothing fit to eat.
Tereus, who's that? what is it meat

Good for a Kite? No: 'twas a Thracian king;
Then hark, I'll warble such a song,
Of *Progne*'s fate and *Philomela*'s wrong,
As needs must charm your ravish't ear.
All this is mighty fine, my dear,
The famish'd Kite replies,
To talk of wind when belly croaks;
You may amuse your Kings and folks,
With such-like airy Jokes.
" Hunger has neither ears nor eyes."

FABLE LII.

The EGYPTIAN GODS.

CLOSE by where Nile's manuring waters glide,
In hieroglyphics ſtrange, we find
That each brute beaſt was deify'd,
By much more brute mankind.
Poor forlorn creatures without houſe or home,
Were honour'd there, with altars and a dome.
One day, within the temple of the *Cat*,
In pompous form they ſacrifice a *Rat*;
The next they for the *Rat* their incenſe burn
And Puſs, with flow'ry chaplets crown'd,
By guards eſcorted, and with ribbons bound,
Is immolated in his turn.
Solemn and ſlow they move along.

And now up to the ſkies,
His Rat head's glory flies
Upon the wings of prieſtly ſong
Strophe, Antiſtrophe, Epode,
Pindaric words that want explaining,
Tack't together without meaning,
Something like a birth-day ode.
O mighty Rat! they ſung aloud,
Avert th' impending ſtorms that o'er us lower:
Break and diſperſe the gloomy cloud;
Upon our heads thy bleſſings ſhower,
And ſhew thy goodneſs with thy power.
What do I hear? exclaim'd the Cat,
A God! what he the Rat!
Then what am I who ſuch great Gods devour?
Such impious words ought never to be ſpoke:
The Prieſt reply'd; and gave the ſacred ſtroke.

Life is chequer'd, Joy and Sorrow;
To-day the God, Victim to-morrow.

Methinks we all from Egypt came;
Their rites and ours are much the ſame,
But we perform them with leſs pother.
Our paſſions are our Gods, as theirs the Brutes:
Which as occaſion ſuits,
We ſacrifice to one another.

FABLE LIII.

The PARTNERSHIP with the LION.

A FOX, a Maſtiff, and a Wolf, we're told,
Once on a time in days of old,
A ſolemn treaty made;
And with a Lion enter'd into trade.
'Twas ſettled for their common weal,
In loſs or gain, to ſhare and ſhare alike:
Without ſtampt paper, witneſſes or ſeal,
As honeſt Beaſts a bargain ſtrike.
One of them ---- 'tis no matter which,
Way-laid a Lambkin in a ditch;
Then call'd the Lion to the feaſt,
Who in four parts tore up the beaſt.
The firſt, ſaid he, of courſe I claim,
Becauſe that Lion is my name.

The ſecond's mine you know by right,
Becauſe I'm King, and beſt can fight.
The third I ſeize as my own ſhare,
And let thoſe touch the fourth who dare.

Beware ye little how ye join
In treaty with the great;
You may look on and ſee them dine,
But never hope to eat.

FABLE LV.

The MAN and the MERMAID.

STRUCK with a Mermaid's face and air,
A Man, 'tis ſaid, fell deep in love;
And night and morn, his only care
Was how the ſea-born Nymph to move.
Along the ſhore he paſs'd his anxious days,
To hear her voice, and on her charms to gaze.
O beauteous Syren! ſtill he cry'd,
Muſt my fond vows for ever be deny'd?
Liſten, O liſten to your lover's prayer.
But ſhe, unmindful of his pain,
Or ſung a ſong, or comb'd her hair,
And ſwan-like ſkim'd along the main.
At laſt the God who rules the liquid main,

Reſolv'd to baniſh his deſpair;
Here take, ſaid he, the blooming Fair,
Nor longer fear her cold diſdain.
And now poſſeſt of all her charms,
He thinks himſelf the happieſt man in life:
But oh! at morn he found within his arms
A monſter for a wife.

How weak and wav'ring is mankind!
One hour elated and the next depreſt;
Their drift is happineſs to find,
And yet they know not when they're really bleſt.

The Mermaid unenjoyed had every grace;
Alas! poſſeſſion turn'd the ſcale.
The Lover only ſaw the beauteous face,
The Huſband ſees the fiſhy tail.

FABLE

FABLE LV.

The FAIRY ELF and his HOSTS.

THERE are a ſort of Fairy Elves,
Good-natur'd, kind, familiar ſprites,
Who love to help the maids o'th' nights,
And ſcour the plates, and clean the ſhelves,
And ſome in gard'ning take delight;
But they muſt do it all themſelves,
For if you touch their work you ſpoil it quite.

In India, as the ſtory goes,
Near where the Ganges to the Ocean flows,
One of theſe Fairies had his ſtation;
And in the garden lay his occupation.
I need not tell how neat 'twas kept:

The graſs-plots mow'd, the alleys ſwept;
He did his taſk by inclination.
For much he lov'd the honeſt quiet pair,
Who own'd the grounds committed to his care.
And tho' by nature every ſprite
Is tranſient, airy, wav'ring, light,
With them he would have fixt his ſtay:
Nor ever choſe to go away.
But ſo it happ'd, an order was ſent down,
From the dread Elf who wore the fairy crown,
For weighty reaſons of their ſtate,
That he muſt change his quarters ſtrait;
Beyond the verge of Norway go,
Midſt hills of ice and tracts of ſnow.
There do the office of a hag,
And ſell a fair wind in a bag.
In ſhort, he muſt obey his ſtern commander,
And from an Indian turn Laplander.

But

But yet before he left the coaſts,
He thus beſpoke his virtuous hoſts;
I am oblig'd my courſe to ſteer
Far hence, ſome orders to fulfill:
And ſore againſt my will,
My pretty garden quit, and leave you here.
A month is all I can delay;
So make good uſe of my ſhort ſtay,
And form three wiſhes to your hearts deſire.
Three wiſhes only I can grant;
Conſider well the things you want,
And you ſhall have whatever you require.
For Man to wiſh is neither ſtrange nor new:
So wiſh away, and ſee what I can do.

The firſt petition our folks made,
Was to abound in wealth and ſtore.
Tho' by the by let it be ſaid,

They had enough, nor wanted more.
With both hands full now plenty pours,
Silver and gold their coffers fill;
With wine their vaults, with corn their floors,
Abundance flows, juſt as they will.
But all theſe riches came not without ſorrow:
They brought on many a care entail.
For now the thieves break in to ſteal;
And Lords and Ladies came to borrow.
With theſe vexations, our folks thought
Their wealth was much too dearly bought.
O! rid us off this affluent gain,
With hearty wiſh they cry;
Come Mediocrity, with all thy train,
Sweet peace of mind, contentment, love and joy.
Once more beneath our roof remain
We ne'er again will from you fly.

So ſaid, they ſtrait were plac'd juſt as before:
Two wiſhes paſt, with neither leſs nor more.

How many mortals do the ſame,
For ever wiſhing, ne'er content,
On wild chimera's bent,
Neglect the ſure to follow airy game.

The Fairy ſmil'd at what was done,
To ſee them where they firſt begun.
And now as 'twas between his hoſts agreed,
They wiſh'd for what they ſtood in need:
And call'd for Wiſdom, which he granted;
The only treaſure that they wanted,
And made them rich indeed.

FABLE LVI.

The OYSTER and the RAT.

A Learned unexperienc'd Rat,
Who ne'er had ſeen nor this nor that,
Imprudent, not conceited yet,
For that by travelling he muſt get,
Reſolv'd like other youths to roam:
So left his *Lares* and his home.
He ſtarce had got in open air,
But round about began to ſtare.
The World is of a vaſt huge ſize!
Theſe are the Alps no doubt; and thoſe
The Pyrenees, I muſt ſuppoſe.
Each mole hill ſeem'd a mountain to his eyes;
And each new object furniſh'd freſh ſurprize.

After ſome few days Journey's paſt,
Our traveller arriv'd at laſt
Near the ſea ſhore: where he eſpy'd
Some Oyſters, which the ebbing tide
Had left half buried in the ſand.
Are theſe the works of Nature's hand?
Or elſe ſome ſtrange Phenomenon?
The thing might bear both Pro and Con.
For you muſt know this Rat of ours,
Was one of thoſe who books devours;
In the Bodleian born and bred,
On Greek and Latin he had fed.
My father ſure, ſaid he, was mighty weak,
Who o'er the threſhold ne'er durſt venture!
Can one in life a proper figure make,
If in the world you never enter?
Whilſt thus, our Juvenile harang'd away,
An Oyſter, luſcious, fat and fair,

Expos'd

Expos'd its tempting boſom bare,
In order to receive the briny ſpray.
The Rat no ſooner ſpy'd the gaping ſhell,
But he exclaim'd, here is indeed a treat
And needs muſt be delicious meat,
It looks ſo very well!
I now or never ſure ſhall feaſt;
For I'm reſolv'd I'll have a taſte,
And not depend on ſight or ſmell.
Then ſtrait into the Oyſter thruſt his head,
Which ſudden clos'd, and ſqueez'd him dead.
Thus like ſome more, that I could tell,
Tho' very learn'd, thro' Ignorance he fell.

Thoſe who but know the world in books,
Know juſt as much as in the Map it looks.
And then another moral here is taught,
That he who ſeeks to catch is often caught.

FABLE LVII.

The QUARREL.

JUdgment, Memory, Imagination,
Together born, together bred,
(Tho' hiſt'ry's ſilent on that head)
In former days had but one habitation.
They liv'd at firſt as near relations ſhould:
But as they had no ties but thoſe of blood,
And were of humours different quite,
They ſquabbled ſoon about each others right;
Juſt as three human creatures would:
And mercy 'twas, they did not fight.

Dame Memory was ever prating,
And Miſs Imagination always in the ſkies,

And grave Don Judgment could not help debating,
Tir'd with impertinence and noiſe.
'Twas you're a babbler, you are mad,
And you're a Pedant, that's as bad.
The argument for ever holding,
For ever ſnarling, ever ſcolding,
And you are this, and you are that,
Was ſtill th' abuſive conſtant chat.
At length, ſaid Judgment, let us part,
Or there's no end of this diſpute;
With all my heart,
Cry'd Memory, that's never mute;
The ſons of SATURN and of OPS did e'en juſt ſo,
Some thouſands years ago:
I recollect the thing, for you muſt know
That JOVE --- hold Sifter, quoth Imagination,
You are encroaching on my ſtation;
What is it to the purpoſe pray?

Since we muſt part, let's haſte away.
So ſaid, each of them took the road,
And fix'd with different perſons their abode.

The man, who furniſh'd Memory a dwelling,
Aſſum'd the ſcholar, one of thoſe
Who all things and yet nothing knows;
From higheſt reading down to ſpelling.

Imagination's hoſt a Poet grew:
And on fictitious wings away he flew,
Without one grain of ſenſe to ſteer his flight;
Like ICARUS flutt'ring round and round,
Now madly ſoaring out of ſight,
Now grov'ling on the ground.

For him who fell to Judgment's lot,
He ſoon became a Man of ſenſe:

That is one neither cold nor hot,
Who all things weighs with where? and whence?
Nor leaves a circumſtance forgot.
A Friend to truth, diſdaining every vice,
Mildly ſevere, not ſcrupulouſly nice,
To merit gives, with Joy, the praiſes due,
Nor fears to cenſure when he cenſures true;
Averſe to flatt'ry, from envy free,
Such was the Man: and ſuch I'd wiſh to be.

But now, tho' parted, Judgment thought it fit
As Siſters and as Brother,
They ought to viſit one another.
And ſo the Man of ſenſe, and Man of wit,
Would on the Man of erudition wait,
Now for a fact, and ſometimes for a date;
But he, puff't up with bookful pride,
Their viſits ne'er repay'd.

He wanted neither Wit's nor Judgment's aid;
Full of himſelf, he ſcorn'd the world beſide.

But as he needs muſt ſhew away,
And ſomewhere his great parts diſplay;
He ſat up ſchool, turn'd writer, then tranſlator,
Could change the text, reviſe, and quote,
And full of various readings never wrote,
At laſt became a Modern Commentator.

FABLE LVIII.

PANDORA.

THE limping God, whom Gods and Men deride,
Determin'd once to vex his faithleſs Bride;
And made a ſtatue ſo divinely fair,
That VENUS fear'd with beauty to compare.
This is, indeed, a maſter piece of art,
Quoth JUPITER, at ſight of ſo much grace:
Son VULCAN well has done his part;
Yet ſtill 'tis but a ſhape and face,
And what are they without a heart?
Such charms to vivify, the taſk be mine.
Who ſhall the will of JOVE controul?
He ſpoke: the marble, at the word divine,
Softens to life, and glows into a ſoul.

And

And now the blooming virgin ſtands confeſt,
In native innocence and beauty dreſt.
Let each, ſaid JUPITER, ſome gift prepare;
Be it t'endow the Maid our common care.
The Gods and Goddeſſes their preſents bring,
To pleaſe their father and their king.
Wit, Wiſdom, Judgment, Talents join'd,
To form the heavenly Dame;
T' adorn her perſon, and improve her mind,
And thence PANDORA was her name:
That is, in whom all gifts unite.
But VENUS mov'd with jealous ſpite,
Reſolv'd to blaſt her growing fame;
And gave a Box: within, ſaid ſhe, there lies
A glorious and immortal prize;
But keep it cloſe: for if the lid you lift,
And dare to pry with curious eyes,
You loſe for e'er the precious gift.

PANDORA

PANDORA was of female kind;
And well the Goddeſs knew
Of courſe what would enſue,
Where prohibition was enjoin'd.
No ſooner of the Box poſſeſt,
She neither patience had nor reſt,
'Till ſhe her mind had ſatisfied;
For what's a treaſure unenjoy'd?
She then in private ſtrait withdrew,
And op'd the Box; when out there flew
A troop of plagues, to vex Mankind;
Pain in the front, and Death behind.
And what was worſe, with them, the horrid crew
Of Sins and Vices burſt into the world:
And round the Globe perdition hurl'd.
Then by what title ſhall we call
Curioſity? The Mother of them all.

And now the Frailties are broke out,
What habitation can they find?
No need to wander long about,
Where there was Man and Woman kind.
For my part, ſaid Ambition, I'll to court,
I there, no doubt, ſhall meet ſupport.
And I'll into the City trudge:
Cry'd Avarice, and hoard, and ſtarve, and drudge.
Lewdneſs with rich young Rakes aſſumes her place;
'Till want of health forſakes her loath'd embrace.
Hypocriſy with falſe and down-caſt look,
'Mongſt Prudes and Devotees, her lodgings took.
And as for Envy and for Spite,
They're ſafe, whilſt Belles appear and Poets write.
But where ſhall Vanity a dwelling find?
Of that, ſaid ſhe, take you no care;
I ſhan't be tied to here nor there,
But live with all Mankind.

FABLE LIX.

The HUNTER and the WOLF.

INordinate desire, strange lust of more,
Still to accumulate and ne'er enjoy,
Monster, whose greedy all devouring eye
Covets the whole for his own private store.
How long must I the lash employ!
How long, obdurate in thy selfish views,
Wilt thou inflame the angry Muse?
Seize now the time, nor back nor forward look;
Enjoy's the word: a word worth a whole book.
Haste then. I will. But when? to-morrow.
Vain Man! this very day
You may be snatch'd away:
For life you cannot hire nor borrow.

Enjoy

Enjoy, I ſay, leaſt to your ſorrow,
You meet the Wolf's and Hunter's fate,
Which in this Fable I relate.

An eager Archer bent his bow,
And ſlew a Buck and eke a Doe.
Twas ven'ſon ſure enough, one would have thought;
But ſome folks ne'er are ſatisfied.
For now a wild Boar falls, as ſoon as ſpied:
Enormous Beaſt with tuſks well fraught;
Such as, in times of yore,
The Fate of poor ADONIS wrought.
At laſt, as much ſtill covets more,
Our greedy Man himſelf was caught.
It ſeems a Patridge ſprung;
The fatal Inſtrument again is ſtrung.
He eyes the bird upon the ſoar,
Regardleſs of the dying Boar,

And points his Bow, prepar'd to twang;
When Bruin ſummon'd his remaining force,
Rips up the hunter with his fang:
And dies, revenged, upon his corſe.
So far Avidity has been my text;
And fordid Avarice ſhall be the next.

A Wolf by chance came by that way:
And ſaw the bodies, as they lay
All in a row, ſtretch'd on the ground.
Propitious fortune! well, ſaid he, I vow
I'll raiſe an altar to you, now:
Such luck is ſeldom found;
Therefore let's manage well our prey.
One may not find ſuch fare again,
The Lord knows when;
'Tis beſt to hoard ſome for a rainy day.
(Of all curmudgeons 'tis the cant:

Who

Who 'midſt of plenty dread to want)
Stay: let me ſee, one, two, three, four,
Why, here's enough for a whole week! or more,
I've din'd to-day, to-morrow I'll begin;
But yet, I hope it is no ſin
To taſte this bow-ſtring now; for I ſuppoſe,
By information of my noſe,
Of real guts 'tis made.
So ſaid,
He falls upon the Bow: off flies the dart,
Which pierc'd the niggard Wolf, quite thro' the heart.
Be pleaſed with what the Gods in kindneſs grant;
Nor covet more than what you really want:
And ſtill, I ſay, enjoy.
Enjoy the bleſſings heaven beſtows;
For who can ſay, but thoſe
Who hoard to-day, to-morrow dye.

FABLE LX.

The WEASEL.

A Half-ſtarv'd Weaſel, lank and thin,
Scarce any thing but bone and ſkin,
Thro' a ſmall chink into the larder got.
Tis needleſs to repeat
What dainties there ſhe eat,
Nor how much bacon went to pot;
In ſhort, ſhe had a treat:
Liv'd at diſcretion all the week,
And now was grown fat, plump and ſleek.
When one day, to her great ſurpriſe,
She heard a noiſe,
And quick ſhe ſcamper'd to the hole;
But all in vain ſhe tries and tries,
She could not ſqueeze thro' for her ſoul.

Why ſure, ſaid ſhe, I'm not miſtaken:
This is the place I crept in at.
That's very true, reply'd a Rat,
But then you had not eat ſo much good bacon.
You now are fat; you came in lean,
And lean you muſt go out again,
Such was the fate of ſome Directors----
But huſh! thoſe are th' affairs of Men:
We are not their Inſpectors.

FABLE LXI.

The Fox and the GRAPES.

A Fox once chanc'd ſome grapes to ſpy,
Plump, luſcious, tempting to the eye,
And much he long'd ſome few to munch:
But by ill luck they hung ſo high,
He could not reach a bunch.
At which he cry'd, quite in a huff,
I would not leave a hair in pledge,
For a whole buſhel of ſuch ſtuff;
No need to taſte, the ſight's enough:
heir very looks have ſet my teeth an edge.

Whenever an attempt proves vain,
As well to ſneer, as to complain.

FABLE LXII.

The LYONESS and the BEAR.

A Mother Lyoneſs had loſt her whelp;
The hunter watch'd the moment when
She roam'd for prey, and rob'd her den:
The ſhocking fact was done, there was no help.

The Queen of beaſts ranged all the foreſt o'er,
Lamenting in a hideous roar,
The heir apparent to her throne;
And deafen'd all the creatures round,
With the repeated yelling ſound,
Of her loud unavailing moan.
Good Madam, ſaid the Bear,
(I'll whiſper it in your royal ear)

Had

Had all thoſe Calves and Lambs on which you fed,
No Fathers nor no Mothers, pray?
Why, to be ſure they had; you'll ſay.
Then if they never ſtun'd our head,
With bleating and with bellowing cries,
I think, 'twixt friends, if you are wiſe,
You'd better hold your tongue, and go to bed.
Oh no! I ne'er muſt cloſe theſe weeping eyes,
Nor ever ceaſe my piteous groan;
The ſtaff, the comfort of my life is flown.
For me, alas! there's no relief,
And who condemns you to eternal grief?
Why, cruel Fate: of all my woes the ſource.
A common place complaint, mere words of courſe.

Impatient mortals ne'er at reſt,
To you this leſſon is addreſt;
All your miſhaps on Fate are thrown.

Fail, and 'tis Fate; ſucceed, and 'tis your own.
Each thinks himſelf th' unhappieſt far;
And curſes his untoward ſtar.
But ſay no more, what's HECUBA to me?
Remember her ſad deſtiny:
And grumble if you dare.

FABLE LXIII.

The CAT and the BAT.

A Favourite Bullfinch, as ſome people tell,
That vied with FARINELLI's throat,
And quaver'd HANDEL's charming note,
To Puſs's jaws a victim fell.
The rav'nous beaſt had ſeiz'd the time,
The careleſs wench had open left the cage,
Then falls upon him with remorſeleſs rage,
And perpetrates the horrid crime.

The Maſter ſhock'd at ſuch a deed,
Reſolv'd the murderer ſhould bleed;
He'd have her either hang'd or drown'd;
The traitreſs heard the threatning ſound;

And made to JOVE a ſolemn vow,
If ſhe but 'ſcap'd the danger now,
She ne'er again would taſte a Bird.
Whether or no her prayer was heard,
The Maſter's menaces were all forgot;
And Puſs no longer fears to go to pot.

One day, as ſhe was on the watch,
A heedleſs Bat ſhe chanc'd to catch;
And as ſhe long'd the prey to taſte,
Her vow came ſtaring in her mind:
But really it was hard to find,
Whether the Bat was bird or beaſt.
At laſt, ſhe cry'd I've found out how
I can in conſcience treat it;
Why, as a Bird I'll keep my vow,
But as a Mouſe I'll eat it.

Thus

Thus intereſt is a caſuiſt guide,
That makes us Lawyers all;
What then was wrong, now right we call,
And plead for either ſide.
A double ſenſe find in each word,
So take which ere we pleaſe:
And be it never ſo abſurd
To make the Bat a beaſt, or bird,
We ſtill find means and ways.

FABLE LXIV.

The STATUARY and The STATUE.

A Block of marble was ſo very rare,
It put the Sculptor to a ſtand.
What ſhall I make, a table, vaſe or chair?
My chiſſel is at your command.

No: it ſhall be a God; ſee him appear,
And in his graſp the dreadful thunder.
Mortals approach, with reverence and fear;
Behold all earth's and heaven's wonder.

So well the artiſt had expreſt the mien,
The looks, the ſterneſs of the God,

Tha

That ſtruck with awe, he firſt himſelf was ſeen
Proſtrate to fall, and wait his nod.

The Poet, as the ſtatuary weak,
Forgets he ſtock'd the realms above;
Thoſe very Gods he made, now make him quake:
He dreads their Ire and ſeeks their love.

'Twas from this ſource Idolatry began,
And in dark chains enthrall'd mankind:
Hence thro' the world each heathen error ran,
With each chimera of the mind.

Falſe Zeal and Superſtition, next, prepare
To form for Ignorance a ſhrine;
Like little girls, their chief delight and care,
Is how to make their BABY fine.

Thro'

Thro' every ſcence of life, in age, in youth,
All men their viſions realiſe;
As frozen as the Northen blaſt for truth,
Warm as the ſouthern gale for lies.

FABLE LXV.

The SCYTHIAN PHILOSOPHER*.

FRom diſtant ſhores where *Tanais* rolls his Stream,
Where Europe ends and Aſia takes its name,
To learn the poliſh'd arts of Greece a Scythian came,
A ſtern Philoſopher of ZENO's ſect was he:
But now reſolv'd more moderate to be,
From rigid rules and ſtoiciſm free,
He met at Athens, or---no matter where,
A good old man who, far from noiſe and ſtrife,
Roll'd gently down the ſlope of life,
Void of Ambition, free from care.
The paths of virtue and of bliſs he trod;

* This fable is tranſmitted down by AULUS GELLIUS, Book xix. Chap. 12.

Such

(Such was the old Coriſcyan* Sage,
Equal to kings, and almoſt Demi-god,
The Mantuan painted in his Georgic page)
This venerable man, the Scythian found
Pruning the trees which in his garden ſtood;
Careful to lop, and ſkilful how to wound
Superfluous branches, or the fruitful wood:
Correcting ſtill with prudent art,
Where Nature too luxuriant ſeem'd,
For which, in kind returns ſhe teem'd
With all the gifts POMONA does impart.
Ah! why this treatment, wild, abſurd and rough?
The Scythian cry'd, where does your wiſdom lye,
The beauties of your Orchard to deſtroy?
Oh! caſt away your knife, for ſoon enough
The Scyth of Time, without your aid,
Will clear your grounds of all their ſhade.

*Regum Æquabat opes animis. VIRG. Georg. lib. iv.

You

You take it wrong; the Grecian made reply:
'Tis true I prune, and cut away
Such boughs, as fruitleſs I eſpy;
But thoſe I leave, with loads, my toil repay:
And every year encreaſe, and multiply.

Then home return'd our Philoſophic Man,
And knife in hand, his garden taſk began;
Amongſt his trees a general havock makes,
Unſkilful when, or how to prune,
The barren twigs for fruitful he miſtakes:
And never minds when full, or new's the Moon,
Stunted his trees, and wither'd are his bowers,
He hoes, promiſcuous, plants and weeds and flowers
'Till all, in one ſad diſmal ſure decay,
Droop, languiſh, fade, and dye away.

The rigid Stoick thus, with Zeal auſtere,

Each

Each innocent deſire controuls:
Good, bad, indifferent, to all ſevere,
He tears up every paſſion from our Souls.
Hold, wretch! nor longer dare deſtroy
Thoſe precious gifts the GODS beſtow;
You, who inſenſible to Grief or Joy,
Nor pain nor pleaſure know;
You draw, juſt draw, your vital breath,
To live, as one may ſay, a living death.

For ever ridicul'd be ZENO's name;
From him your Puritans and Quakers came.
In Albion we have Methodiſts,
In Gallia they have Janſeniſts,
All fools alike: and every where the ſame.

FABLE LXVI.

The ELEPHANT and Jupiter's APE.

IN times of old a ſtory went,
His ſublime Highneſs, Sultan Elephant,
For weighty reaſons of the ſtate,
To King Rhinoceros a challenge ſent,
In ſingle combat to decide their fate;
Their ſubjects ſlaughter to prevent.
A faſhion long ſince out of date!
And now the Heroes for the liſts prepare;
When 'twas reported that the Ape of JOVE,
Was ſeen deſcending from above,
Waving his winged wand in air.
The Elephant, at news of this ſtrange ſight,
Thought proper to retard the fight.

For to be ſure this Ape, ſaid he,
Is ſent Ambaſſador to me;
Credentials he of courſe will ſhow,
'Tis fit, ere we engage, JOVE's will to know;
Important tidings he, no doubt, muſt bring:
And I'll receive him, as becomes a King.
And yet, methinks, this plenipo
Is in his motions very ſlow.
But little Envoys ſtill aſſume moſt ſtate,
As if the ceremonial made them great.
He ſpoke: when Pug arriv'd and paſs'd along,
With careleſs air, amidſt the gazing throng;
Then juſt vouchſaf'd a look, and turn'd away.
Our Elephant ſurpriz'd, as may be gueſs'd,
He nothing had to ſay,
Spite of his Pride, the Monkey thus addreſs'd.
My Couſin JOVE will ſoon from his high throne,
See ſuch a combat, that the God's muſt own,

Excep

Except when on the Trojan plain
The ſon of PELEUS left great HECTOR ſlain,
The like before was never known.
What combat! ſaid the Monkey with a frown,
That JUPITER muſt needs from heaven look down?
Why, don't you know, the Elephant reply'd,
Sophy Rhinoceros againſt all law,
With equal inſolence and pride,
Aſſumes to take of me the *Pas*?
Now to repel the dire alarms,
Which ſuch pretenſions needs muſt draw,
The Elephantic ſtate is up in arms,
Againſt the Rhinocerian Crown;
Dominious of no ſmall renown!
Foremoſt they ſtand upon the liſt of fame;
No doubt, you often muſt have heard their name.
Not I: the Monkey anſwer'd with a ſneer,
You're in your notins much deceiv'd;

In ſuch like trifles we ne'er interfere.

Then pray what buſineſs brought you here?
Said the long-ſnouted Sultan, baulk'd and griev'd.
I came, quoth Pug, commiſſion'd from on high,
To ſplit this grain of wheat
Between a Piſmire and a Fly.
All things that live muſt eat:
And Providence ſtill ſends a freſh ſupply.
The Elephant and Mite
Stand juſt in the ſame light.
The Gods appretiate not by weight or ſize:
The Great, the Small,
Are equal all,
In their impartial eyes.

FABLE LXVII.

The KING, his SON, and the TWO PARROTS.

Two Parrots, ſon and father, liv'd at Court.
And ſo it happ'd the Monarch and his Heir
Would often with the praters ſport:
For birds were their delight and care.
The old folks lov'd, like people of their age;
The young ones, juſt as Prince and Page.
Where familiarity, by freedom fed,
Knocks all diſtinction in the head.
How ere young Poll was not the only Bird,
That ſhar'd the Prince's favour;
A chirping ſparrow with his pert behaviour,

Oft in their parties made a third.
And as it is the way,
Amongſt young Chaps like thoſe,
They now and then would play,
Till they fell out and came to blows.
It hap'ned then one day,
Poll gave poor Philip ſuch a peck,
As almoſt left him on the ſpot;
At which the cholerick Prince wax'd hot,
And twiſted off the Parrot's neck.
The news ſoon reach'd the father's ears,
Who with loud moan proclaim'd his grief;
But what avail or ſighs or tears,
When there is no relief?
Alas the cruel deed was done;
And is there no redreſs? he cries,
So ſaid, wing'd with revenge, he flies,
Upon the Monarch's ſon,

And tore out both his eyes.
Then God-like tow'ring to the ſkies,
Upon the top of an old tree he ſtood:
With vengeance ſated, and replete with blood.

The King his friend, and maſter,
At hearing of the ſad diſaſter,
Ran to the place where he was flown,
And thus his favourite Bird addreſs'd:
What ſignifies revenge or moan?
We muſt ſubmit to Jove's beheſt;
And tho' I greatly am diſtreſt
I yet, with ſorrow, needs muſt own,
The blame lies on my ſon alone.
My ſon! Oh no; it was by Fate decreed,
They by each other's hands ſhould bleed;
One loſe his ſight and one his life.
Kind heaven forbid that we ſhould be at ſtrife.

Then friendly as we were before,
Return and think of it no more.
And do you think, the Parrot made reply,
I can be taken with a hook ſo bare?
Vengeance I know is royal fare;
Your ſon would find me out without an eye.
But this is nought but idle prate;
For be it Providence or Fate,
That governs all the world below,
'Tis wrote, that in ſome deſert I ſhall go:
And there, my Deſtiny await.
Nothing my fixt reſolve can move;
For abſence is the only cure for hate,
As 'tis a remedy for love.

FABLE LXVIII.

The MOUNTEBANK DEITIES.

APOLLO and MINERVA in disgrace,
Were banish'd from above.
'Twas vain to argue in the case,
Such was the will of JOVE;
For if the father of the Gods,
But nods,
The only way,
Is to obey:
There's no contending 'gainst such odds.

Our Exiles then as we conjecture,
Depriv'd of Ambrosie and Nectar,
A council held, how to proceed,

And

And by what means ſupply their need.
For my part, ſaid LATONA's ſon,
I think I've found what courſe to run;
I'll ſet up Doctor, for you know
I am a Quack *in ſtatu quo.*
Nay as to that, then ſtrait reply'd
The Goddeſs born without a mother,
For phyſick I am qualified
As much, perhaps, as any other.
Then let's about this buſineſs quickly,
And ſtop at ſome place, that's moſt ſickly.

So ſettled, they to Earth came down.
And if we are allow'd to gueſs
By their ſucceſs,
They muſt have fix'd in London town.
There whilſt one patient's left alive,
A mountebank is ſure to thrive.

APOLLO

APOLLO cried, here take theſe pills,
They cure the body of all Ills;
And here's my Sov'reign grand Elixir,
That almoſt makes a dead man quick, Sir;---
Reſtores old age to youth again,
And rids you of each ach and pain.
As for MINERVA ſhe profeſs'd
A higher art: ſhe could controul
Th' unruly paſſions of the Soul;
Which thus her printed bills expreſs'd.---
Mortals approach, be happy, and rejoice!---
'Tis Wiſdom calls; O! liſten to my voice!---
I come to heal your boſoms of all Sin:
As fair without I'll make you white within.
Try what aſſiſtance I may lend.
I can a broken conſcience mend:
Sweeten the breath of Envy's ſtench:---
The thirſt of hot Ambition quench:---

Nay

Nay e'en --- a Miſer's money'd fiſt unclench;
Weed every vice from heart and head,
And plant each virtue in their ſtead.
All this, and more, I can inſure;
And aſk no money if no cure.

APOLLO took the ſurer way,
He firſt ſold hope, then made them pay.
All to the God their Bodies carried,
And rich as any Quäck grew he;
But not a ſoul with Wiſdom tarried:
MINERVA did not take a fee.

How true an emblem of Mankind!
You ſee it every where,
The Soul, alas! we ſeldom mind,
The Body's all our care.

FABLE LXIX.

The MAN and the FLEA.

VAIN Man, importunate and weak,
With empty vows and idle prayers,
Not for the whole but for his own dear ſake,
Dins all Olympus with his ſelfiſh cares;
And thinks each trifling ſcene in life,
Squabbles at WHITE's or with his wife,
Muſt needs as much concern the Gods,
As when the Greeks and Trojans were at odds.

A fribbliſh ſpark once by a Flea was bit;
O HERCULES! cry'd he, is it then fit
Monſters like theſe ſhould be endur'd to thrive?
How came this Hydra to be left alive,

When

When you ſo many ſmaller plagues deſtroy'd?
And, O great JOVE! can you unmindful ſit,
And ſee us with ſuch vermin ſo annoy'd?

He would have ſtirr'd all Earth and ſea,
Th' HERCULEAN club and thunder-bolt employ'd,
To cruſh a Flea.

FABLE LXX.

The Cock and the Fox.

FULL in the center of a lofty tree,
An old wife Cock had made his neſt:
And there, from doubts and dangers free,
In ſafety took his reſt.
A Fox, who ſpy'd him perch't ſecure,
With ſoftned voice and air demure,
Thus Chanticleer addreſt.

Dear Brother, why ſo very high?
I bring you tidings full of Joy.
'Twixt Birds and Beaſts henceforth there's peace:
Then prithee don't be ſhy;
Come down, and in a cloſe embrace,
We will the knot of friendſhip tye.

Why this is welcome news indeed,
Reply'd the creſted Bird.
And ſee a Maſtiff on full ſpeed
Directs his ſteps this way;
He comes, no doubt, to make a third,
And celebrate with us this happy day.---
What's that? quoth Reynard in a fright,
Farewell: we'll e'en poſtpone the kiſs;
And talk ſome other time of this,
He ſaid: and ſcamper'd out of ſight.

To bite the biter doubles the delight.

FABLE LXXI.

The two MULES.

TWO Mules together travell'd on the road:
One bore the military cheſt,
And one the Miller's wheaten load;
Chearfull they went, nor wanted whip nor goad.
The firſt proud of his charge, with ribbons dreſt,
Jingles his bells and nods his plumed creſt;
The other gravely jogs to his abode.
When lo! the mountaineers appear,
Some took the front and ſome the rear;
And as the money was the bait,
For which they lay in wait,
They ſtop'd the martial beaſt and ſeiz'd his bit.
It would have ſeem'd unſoldier to ſubmit

Without one kick or blow:
And then his honour too, you know,
So, he reſiſts, and ſcorns to yield;
But all in vain,
For oh! he falls, he's ſlain:
And leaves them maſters of the field.
But like the Hero in the play,
He ſtill had ſomething left to ſay:
Then faulter'd out with pangs and ſtarts,
Occaſion'd by his ſmarts,
O Stars! O Gods! is this the fate
Reſerv'd for me and for the great?
Alas! too late I find
'Twas mad Ambition fir'd my mind;
And ſee, ſecure
In being poor,
The Mule in ſafety comes behind.

Ah! My dear Brother,
Reply'd the other,
Too high a ſtation is a dangerous thing.
Had you ne'er been at court, nor ſerv'd a King,
But had like me gone only to the mill,
You might in a whole ſkin be living ſtill.

FABLE LXXII.

The FISHERMAN and the LITTLE FISH.

THE ſmalleſt Fry grow Fiſh in time;
If not cut off before their prime.
But he who throws them in the ſtream,
In hopes, when grown, to take again,
Will very likely loſe his aim,
And bait his hook in vain.

A little Carp, from ſpawn juſt hatch't,
Once, on a luckleſs day, was catch't.
The Fiſherman ſmil'd at his prey:
Howere, quoth he, 'tis ſomewhat to begin;

Into my wallet ſhew the way,
For greater to go in.

The Carpling ſaw th' impending fate,
And ſtrove with all his little prate,
To ward the dreadful blow.
Alas! he cry'd, in me
A puny ſcanty thing you ſee,
Not worth a ſhrimp or grig;
Indeed you'd better let me go,
And catch me when I'm big.
I then may prove a noble fiſh,
Fit for my Lord Mayor's board;
So he will have a dainty diſh,
And you encreaſe your hoard.
I'm not a mouthful for a child;
A hundred ſuch as I
Might on a ſaucer lye,

Unfit for eating, fry'd or boil'd.
Why then, my Dear, you ſhall be broil'd,
Our Angler made reply,
And that this very night.
The Fiſherman was in the right.
Who'd give the Now for By and by?

This leſſon can never too often be con'd,
A Fiſh in the Pan is worth two in the Pond.

FABLE LXXIII.

The WISHES.

A Country Bumpkin, as 'tis ſaid,
Who labour'd hard for daily bread,
Reflecting on his wretched ſtate,
Arraign'd the Gods, and curs'd his fate;
For he could make it plain appear,
He never once, in all his life,
Obtain'd a wiſh, except his wife;
And that, God knows, he paid for dear.

One day as he complaining ſtood,
When he had fell'd a load of wood,
Great JUPITER from heaven came down;
And thus beſpoke the murm'ring clown,

Raſh Man! doſt thou then think the Gods don't know
When to withold their gifts and when beſtow?
I now vouchſafe to liſten to thy prayer:
So form three wiſhes, and by Stix I ſwear
Whatever thou doſt aſk thou ſhalt obtain;
Conſider well thy wants, nor wiſh in vain.

So ſaid, JOVE to the ſkies return'd.
And ROGER with impatience burn'd,
Till he got home to JOAN his wife.
We now are happy, and for life,
Cry'd he: and then began to tell,
From firſt to laſt, all that befell:
The gracious viſit JOVE had paid,
And th' awful promiſe which he made.
Dear huſband then, quoth prudent JOAN,
Theſe are rare doings I muſt own;
But as to hurry there's no need,
With ſober caution let's proceed:

For ere one takes ſo great a ſtep,
'Tis wiſe to look before you leap.
Quoth ROGER, that's the thing I meant;
How thou has jumpt with my intent!
And ſince 'tis wiſh, and have at will,
Let's e'en enjoy ourſelves my dear:
So prithee fetch a mug of beer.
At her return he took a luſty ſwill,
And lolling on his chair at heart's deſire,
Indulging thought, and happy as a King:
While we have got, ſaid he, ſo clear a fire,
A nice black pudding would be no bad thing.
He ſpoke, and from the chimney ſide,
A long black pudding JOAN eſpy'd,
That like a ſerpent winding came,
As if on purpoſe to be fry'd;
At which ſhe ſat up ſuch a ſcream,
As almoſt ſtun'd her huſband's ears;

But rage ſucceeding ſoon her fears,
She ſtrait a peal of fury rung,
Thro' all the changes of her tongue.
Sure ſuch an oaf was never ſeen!
Thou greateſt Booby of all Boobies,
We Sir and Lady might have been;
Or thou a King and I Queen,
All cover'd o'er with pearls and rubies:
With gold brocade and ſilver ſtuff,
And thoſe too hardly good enough;
Inſtead of which, you muſt for pudding cry.
The Devil fill your greedy gut, ſay I.
The huſband, work'd up to a paſſion,
Had a month's mind to lay his laſh on.
As Cobler JOBSON ſtrap'd his NELL,
ROGER perhaps had done as well.
When man with woman once is leagued,
It is to be compleatly plagued.

Here's

Here's for a pudding ſuch a rout!
O how 't would make my heart rejoice,
Could it but ſtop thy ſqualling voice,
To ſee it dangle at thy ſnout.
His prayer by JUPITER was heard;
For quick as he the words preferr'd,
Up from the hearth the pudding ſprung,
Fixt on her noſe, and there it hung.
Now JOAN was comely tho' low bred,
Clear natural white and wholeſome red;
And, to ſpeak truth, on ſuch a face,
The pudding was no ſmall diſgrace.
One comfort tho' it brought along,
It made the vixen hold her tongue.
Howere thought ROGER, with the wiſh remaining,
He might be made a King and fill a throne.
But then, tho' Sovereign power' is worth obtaining,
In what light would appear his dear queen JOAN?

Let

Let ſhe herſelf th' affair decide:
Either to be a Royal Bride,
With that moſt horrid noſe ſhe has,
Or, elſe deſpiſing Pomp and Crown,
From grandeur all at once come down,
And be poor JOAN, juſt as ſhe was.
All things conſider'd, pro and con,
Tho' well ſhe knew in ſuch a caſe,
That they whoſe heads have crowns upon,
Of courſe abound in charms and grace.
Yet as to pleaſe is every woman's pride,
Mankind to captivate and to bewitch,
She rather poor and pretty would abide,
Than to be ugly and be rich.

So ROGER alter'd not his ſtate,
He neither wealthy grew nor great;
Happy, he ſtill had one wiſh more

To make his wife attain her ends:
Poor ſatisfaction! ſmall amends!
Her former beauty to reſtore,
And leave her noſe as t'was before.

How vain, abſurd and fickle are Mankind!
Still prone to veer with every blaſt of wind;
In ſearch of others bliſs their own forgoe,
With idle wiſhes importuning Heaven,
And yet how few there are who rightly know
To uſe ſuch bleſſings as the Gods have given!

FABLE LXXIV.

The three YOUNGSTERS and The OLD MAN.

AT fourſcore, think of planting!
The poor old man muſt ſurely doat;
For who would make a birth-day coat,
When nothing but a ſhroud is wanting?
In brick and mortar he himſelf might pleaſe,
And live t'enjoy his houſe --- at leaſt ſome days.
But could he ever hope to ſee
One of thoſe twigs grow up a tree?
Let other cares, good man, your thoughts employ;
Reflect on all your errors paſt,
And leave us young folks to enjoy
Pleaſures to come, and like to laſt.

Thus

Thus ſpoke three Youths, who ſaw an aged man
For future foreſts laying out a plan.
Preſumptuous Boys!
Th' old Man replies,
We all muſt pay one common debt;
You ſaw the Sun this morning riſe,
But who can ſay he'll ſee it ſet?
Alike your days and mine are told;
I have been young but you may ne'er be old.
Since life at moſt is but a ſpan,
I will enjoy it all I can:
I do enjoy it now, in what you blame;
To think, one day beneath theſe ſpringing groves
My children's children may talk o're their loves,
Admire the ſhade I gave, and bleſs my name.
Can greater tranſports fill a virtuous breaſt
Than that of making others bleſt!

I yet ſome years may draw my vital breath:
And live, for ought you know, to weep your death.
Alas! he propheſied aright.
One of the youths was ſlain in fight;
The other, who went out to ſea,
Was in the voyage caſt away;
The third, as ſporting on the courſe,
Was kill'd by an unruly horſe.
Our old man griev'd at their untimely doom,
And had this ſtory wrote upon their tomb.

FABLE LXXV.

The Two DREAMS.

COME, ſweet Variety: without thy aid
APOLLO's winged courſer flags a Jade,
In all thy party-colour'd trim appear,
Like flow'ry May that variegates the year;
Give grace and ſpirit to the ſong;
And as the Bee for ever ranging,
That's never happy but when changing,
Juſt ſip the ſweets and fly along.
Come with Invention hand in hand,
Whilſt Fiction waves her magic wand;
Still ſhift the ſcene, but not the plan,
From man to beaſt, from beaſt to man;
Or leave the men and beaſts and things,
And take your flight on fancy's wings;

Embody every paſſion of the Soul:
Command all nature and the Gods controul.
But yet in all retain one point in view,
Tho' feign'd the Tale, the Moral muſt be true.
Then let us uſe the privilege we claim,
Give ſpeech to air, and ſubſtance to a Dream.

Two Dreams, 'tis ſaid, (we'll call them *Black* and *White*)
Into the Turk's Seraglio ſlid one night.
The firſt poſſeſſion of the Sultan got;
An Eunuch was the other's lot.
When thus, as ſoon as morning came,
The *White* beſpoke the *Sable* Dream.

What ſays my Viſionary Brother?
Has he perform'd his deſtin'd part,
And made his Turban'd Highneſs ſmart?

I have

I have indeed, reply'd the other,
Both ſcar'd his head and plagu'd his heart.

Firſt then, to quicken his alarms,
The Janiſſaries are in arms;
Their Aga leads them on, and now
They pluck the Creſcent from his brow:
His Brother for their Sovereign own,
Who from a dungeon mounts the throne.
The mutes their fatal orders bring,
About his neck they twiſt the ſtring;
Then what is now this Sultan King?
Mere man indeed. Proſtrate he ſues
For wretched life, which they refuſe;
Pale are his cheeks, erect his hair,
Convulſions ſhake his labouring frame:
He wakes with horror and deſpair,
Deliver'd at the laſt extream,

And thanks his ſtars — 'tis all a dream!
If I but let him ſleep again,
'Tis only to enhance his pain;
Pleas'd at his ſtarts, encreaſe his throes,
And drag him on from woes to woes.
Thus every night I make the Monarch ſhake,
Who longs for morn, and trembles tho' awake.

Methinks, reply'd the Viſion white,
You have outdone your uſual ſpite.
My taſk was of a different nature,
I made my ſlave a happy creature:
Soon as to reſt he was compos'd,
The reigning Sultan I depos'd,
Then ſet my Man upon the throne;
The Empire Ottoman his own.
He here gives peace, there war declares,
To conquer Europe next prepares;

With

With thirſt of glory now he burns,
Now crown'd with victory returns:
Then midſt his bright Sultanas goes,
Where each would fain his paſſion ſhare:
And now to pleaſe they all prepare,
Each grace unveil, each charm diſcloſe,
Till, fir'd with love, the handkerchief he throws,
Which ſingles out the happy Fair.
No anxious thoughts his bliſs deſtroy,
I lead him on from Joy to Joy.
Thus to my Muſſulman, by me, 'tis given
To paſs each night within his Prophet's heaven.

Was Slave or Sultan better fated?
'Tis difficult to know;
The caſe is ſeldom rightly ſtated,
That's judged from outward ſhew.
Man's life or happy or unhappy proves

By ſecret ſprings unſeen, on which it moves.
When we behold the wealthy and the grand,
We think that Fortune's wheel is at a ſtand,
Their bliſs ſeems ſo compleat;
But could we in their boſoms pry,
That which we ſee with envy's eye,
Our pity would create.

FABLE LXXVI.

The STORY-TELLERS.

A Merchant once, if PILPAY tells us true,
Went out to traffic, at ſome foreign Fair,
And left, as cautious people do,
A ſtock of Iron to his neighbour's care.
At his return, where is my Iron, pray?
Your Iron did you ſay?
Alas! whilſt you was gone afar
A Rat devour'd it every bar.
I've ſcolded all my folks; but what of that?
Where is the ſtore-houſe proof againſt a Rat?
The Merchant feign'd to take it all for truth;
There was no help, the fact was done,
But in a day or two he met his neighbour's Son,
And kidnap'd by ſome means the youth.
He then invites the father to a feaſt.

O friend! what pleaſures can I taſte?
My Son is loſt, my comfort's fled----
Your ſon!---the trader ſaid,
Laſt night I ſaw an Owl, from yon old houſe
Fly out, that ſeiz'd him by the head,
And bore him off, as tho' he were a mouſe.
That is a ſtory too abſurd,
My boy himſelf had catch'd the bird:
You take me ſurely for a fool.
Not I: but prythee friend be cool.
Is it a wonder pray?
Where Rats a tun of Iron eat,
That with a child not ten ſtone weight,
An Owl ſhould fly away?
The father ſaw his neighbour's drift, and ſmil'd,
Reſtor'd the Iron, and receiv'd his child.

Between two travellers aroſe
The ſame diſpute; one was of thoſe,

Our

Our Story ſays, who never ſee
But thro' a magnifying glaſs.
Each Liliput a Brobdignag muſt be,
And wonders riſe where 'ere they paſs.
I ſaw a cabbage once, not far from Rome,
Said one, big as a houſe, or very nigh.
And I, reply'd a ſtander by,
A Pot as large as Peter's dome.
Well, quoth the firſt, if fibbing be a Sin,
You've much to anſwer for, I fear!
Why ſo? ſaid th' other with a ſneer,
My pot was made to boil your cabbage in.
Such folks, by reaſon to confute,
Would be but lengthning the diſpute.
Better to hear all they can ſay.
Seem to give credit to each word,
Then tell a ſtory more abſurd:
'Tis much the ſhorteſt way.

FABLE

FABLE LXXVII.

A Saying of SOCRATES.

WHEN SOCRATES had built his houſe; we find
Friends came, as 'twas the way, to ſpeak their mind.
One blam'd the Portico, and one the Hall;
But all agreed the Manſion was too ſmall.
Had it, the Sage reply'd, much ſmaller been,
Still were it large enough for me.
O! would kind heaven but grant, that I might ſee
As many real friends as I can lodge within!

To friendſhip's charter all lay claim;
The touch-ſtone is the caſe of need.
Nothing ſo common as a friend by name;
Nor any thing ſo ſcarce as one in deed.

FABLE

FABLE LXXVIII.

The WALLET.

JOVE ſummon'd once, from far and near,
All living Creatures to appear
Before his awful throne:
The God ſurvey'd the motley crowd,
Firſt pauſed a while, then ſpoke aloud
In grave majeſtic tone.
If there be any here, Bird, Beaſt, or Man,
Who thinks he is not handſome, witty, wiſe,
Let him ſhew where his grievance lies;
And I'll redreſs it if I can.
You, Monkey there, to thee I firſt apply,
(I have my reaſons why)
Amidſt theſe Beaſts look round about,

In

In conſcience ſay, canſt thou find out
One handſomer than thee?
Tell me thy mind, and ſpeak it free.
Not one indeed, reply'd the Ape.
Gaze on theſe features, view this ſhape,
My portrait on each ceiling ſhews:
We monkeys are deſign'd for Beaus,
Things, for which Ladies make ſo ſtrange a fuſs!
And like the more becauſe they copy us.
As for our brother Bruin there,
A half form'd lumpiſh unlick'd Bear,
If to advice he can ſubmit,
He ne'er will for his picture ſit,
Except HOGARTH ſhould want a phiz;
Then none indeed ſo fit as his.
The Bear approach'd: and, after ſuch a ſpeech,
All thought he had ſome favour to beſeech;
Not he indeed: pleaſed with his own perfections;

On

On th' Elephant he caſt reflections
How long his ears! how ſhort his tail!
The Architect miſplaced the ſcale;
Was ever ſeen ſo ſtrange a Creature?
Whilſt this was thankful to kind Nature,
But thought her cruel to th' unweildy Whale.
The little Ant deſpis'd the ſmaller Mite,
And this a ſmaller yet again,
Some Inſect out of mortal ſight,
That bleſt itſelf to be unknown to Men.

In ſhort all with themſelves quite ſatisfy'd
Found ſomewhat in each other to deride.
But of all Creatures Man moſt ſelfiſh was:
For ever blaming that or this,
Never content with what he has,
And always pleaſed with what he is.

Thus

Thus thro' a teleſcope Mankind we ſpy;
A brother's frailties, monſtrous grown,
We at the magnifying end deſcry,
Then turn the glaſs to view our own.
For ſo it is, both Man and Womankind,
Time out of mind,
By JUPITER's command a wallet bore:
To our own follies ever blind,
We hide them in the pouch behind,
But place our neighbour's in the pouch before.

FABLE LXXIX.

The old LYON.

A LYON, once the terror of the plain,
Who far and wide had ſtretch'd his bloody reign;
Unable now to range about,
By ſickneſs, and with age worn out,
He that made all the foreſts tribute pay,
Sad! but too common turn of Fate! at length
To his own Vaſſals falls a prey;
Who to his weakneſs owe their ſtrength.
The Horſe firſt kick't him on that brow,
Which erſt was circled with a crown,
Where is, he cry'd, the Monarch now!
Then neigh'd to ſee him down.
Bit by the Wolf, gor'd by the Ox,
Teazed by the Ape, and laught at by the Fox.

He

He whoſe tremendous roar was wont to make
The woods and mountains ſhake;
Reſign'd, without a murmur, feels
The bite of teeth, and bruiſe of heels;
But when he ſaw the Jack-aſs, in his turn
Approach, to give his Majeſty a ſpurn,
Ah! this is more than mortal beaſt can bear!
Then ſhrunk his head and drop'd a tear;
I was content to yield my breath,
But ſtruck by thee, 'tis double death.

O ye! who at the helm preſide,
Be Good as ye are great;
Leſt by ſome ſudden ebb of tide,
You meet the Lyon's fate.
For ſhould you fall in ſuch diſgrace,
From high to low, all thoſe who paſs,
Will juſt behave as did our aſs;
And ſpurn a Courtier out of place.

FABLE

FABLE LXXX.

The BEES.

THE Monarch of a ſwarm of Bees
In Council ſat, beneath a clump of trees,
Enacting laws to make his people thrive;
For all his cares were center'd in the hive.
He iſſued out a proclamation,
Informing all the humming nation,
Some learned Bees had lately found
That certain bloſſoms were not ſound;
And therefore none ſhould make pretext
Or dare to taſte the liſt annext.
Who e'er brings home his honey freight
Shall be examin'd at the gate;
And if found guilty of the fact,
'Twas death, according to the act.

And now each Bee to work diſpoſes,
And gathers from the faireſt flowers,
From Woodbines, Lillies, Pinks and Roſes,
From Violet beds and Jeſs'min bowers;
Now hyeing home to their retreat,
Their little thighs with ſweets replete.
It happen'd once, a favourite Bee,
Reſtrain'd by neither fear nor awe,
Unmindful of the King's decree,
Taſted of ſome forbidden tree.
As tho' exempted from the law.
But there ſhe quite miſtook the caſe,
As ſoon ſhe found by her diſgrace.
The guards diſcover'd by the flavour,
That ſhe aſtray had been;
But as ſhe ſtood ſo high in favour
They like true Courtiers let her in.
As round the hive the Monarch went,
He trac'd the guilty by the ſcent;

And doom'd to death, as 'twas their due,
The guards and favourite too,
O Sir! cry'd out his buzzing Train,
Save, ſave their lives, for pity's ſake:
In time to come they'll warning take,
Nor ever ſin again.
I muſt refuſe, the ſteady Monarch ſaid,
Kings have no right, nor power to break
Thoſe laws themſelves have made.
By this example, ſet before your view,
I ſave whole numbers whilſt I puniſh few.

The brighteſt Jewel in a monarch's crown
Is that which ſheds the rays of mercy down;
It is th' intrinſic worth of Kings,
Whence ſprings
Their people's love, their own renown.

Ye Gods on earth! who repreſent
Him, who made earth and firmament,
Whilſt you his grandeur have in view,
Let not his goodneſs be forgot;
The Thunder often rolls, 'tis true,
The bolt is ſeldom ſhot.
But let not Pity ſo prevail,
To blunt the ſword or turn the ſcale:
When Juſtice dooms, 'tis fit the guilty fall;
For if th' example made by Law,
Thro' terror keeps mankind in awe,
Mercy to one is Cruelty to all.

FABLE LXXXI.

The FOOTMAN and the MAGPYE.

A PUBLIC Miniſter a Secretary had,
The Secretary a Valet,
And JOHN poſſeſs'd, a thing as bad,
A favourite Pye: all arrant thieves, but yet
'Twill ſcarcely gain belief,
The Bird was the moſt modeſt thief.
The Miniſter, of courſe muſt rob the ſtate,
And under him the Secretary cheat;
JOHN from his maſter ſteals what he can get,
And all was fiſh that came to Magy's net,
Thus life is but a Courſe of theft,
Without a break to right or left.

Still JOHN found miſſing every day
One thing or other, ſtoln away:
There enters here, thought he, no third;
It then muſt be that roguiſh bird.
To know the truth, I muſt with caution act;
So watch'd the Pye, and caught him in the fact;
Conveying to a private hole,
A piece of ſilver, which he ſtole;
Like other Miſers, laying by
A hoard, he never could enjoy.
And have I catch'd thee then? he ſaid,
Ungrateful bird! nought but thy head,
ſhall pay the forfeit of thy crime;
So if thou a haſt a prayer to ſay,
Make no delay,
For very brief's thy time.
O mercy, mercy! cry'd the Pye:
Have you not done the ſame as I?

Your maſter and his maſter too,
Have they not done the ſame as you?
Then ah! to me that pardon grant,
Which, ſoon or late, you all may want.
There was great truth in what the magpye ſaid;
But cruel JOHN, without remorſe,
Cut ſhort the thread of his diſcourſe,
And twiſted off his head.

'Twas ever thus: the weakeſt to the wall.
Where great Rogues ſtand, the little fall.

FABLE LXXXII.

The ADVANTAGE of LEARNING.

BEtwixt two fellow citizens, of yore,
A conteſt roſe: the cauſe of which
Was this -- one learned was, but poor,
The other ignorant, and rich.
Preſumptuous! ſaid the man of ſtore,
To dare with me to vye;
For really now, 'twixt you and I,
What does your knowledge bring you more
Than him who begs from door to door?
Methinks you're much upon the par;
Tho' all this while,
I ſee in your contemptuous ſmile,
You fancy you ſurpaſs me far.

But

But tell me, friend,
With all your wit, where will your folly end?
For folly ſure it is, as you proceed;
Thus ever, without reſt, to write and read:
And all for what? for fame you'll ſay.
'Tis mighty fine! no doubt, but pray
Will fame ſupply your need?
How many friends do you invite
To dine at noon or ſup at night?
Who on his wit and knowledge is dependant,
Has nothing but his ſhadow for attendant.
Of what importance to the State
Are thoſe, who have no wealth to ſpend?
The only uſeful are the Great,
Who make their money circulate;
Tradeſmen, Artificers and Taylors,
Pimps, Poets, Bawds, and Small-ware dealers,
On us, grand folks, depend,

To all this ſtuff, the ſcholar held his tongue;
There was indeed too much to ſay:
To prove a fool is in the wrong,
Is talk and time both thrown away.
The Wars ſpoke for him, ere 'twas long;
For ſo it hap'd, their town was taken,
And by our Citizens forſaken.
The Ignoramus was obliged to roam,
Deſpis'd by all, without a friend or home.
The Man of letters, every where careſt,
Prov'd plain, t'wixt Wealth and Science which was beſt.

What ever Intereſt prompts, or Fools deviſe,
Poſſeſs yourſelves of Knowledge, and be wiſe.

FABLE LXXXIII.

The SHEPHERD and the SEA.

BLEST with the profits of his bleating ſtore,
Near the ſea ſhore,
A ſhepherd liv'd content;
'Tis true his income was but ſmall,
But it was ſure: that's all in all,
He had enough and paid his rent;
What could he wiſh for more?

It ſo miſhap'd, he ſaw each day
Veſſels arriving in the bay;
Whoſe treaſures cover'd all the ſtrand.
To mad ambition he gives way,
Nor can he longer now withſtand

The

The ſtrong temptation to be rich and great:
But greedily devours the alluring bait,
And ſells his ſheep and land.
Then in one bottom to his coſt,
He raſhly ventures all; and all was loſt.
Thus tumbled from his former ſtate,
He that was once the foremoſt of the Swains,
Th' ALEXIS or the DAPHNIS of the plains,
For whom the ſhepherdeſſes made ſuch rout,
Was now plain ROGER or poor COLIN CLOUT.
How e'er in time with diligence and pains,
Hoarding each day his little gains,
Once more he owns a flock;
Sets up a-new,
Buys in more ſtock,
Encreaſing every day his ſtore:
And, tho' no Bankrupt, richer grew
Than what he was before.

By

By Fortune favour'd, as by Fortune croſt,
Our Shepherd now no longer toſt,
Again is ſettled to his mind:
And ne'er enquires how ſits the wind.
But as perchance near the ſea ſide,
He gaz'd around, and ſaw the tide
Scarce dimpled by the breeze:
And ſaw the ſhips in ſafety ride;
Ah! flattering faithleſs deep! he cry'd,
I fell by looks like theſe.
VENUS, 'tis ſaid, from you aroſe:
You have, I ſee, your daughter's ſmiles,
With all her harlot wiles,
And want more money I ſuppoſe;
But, Lady Waves, I'm none of thoſe
That twice are to be caught;
You may tempt others as you tempted me,
But, faith, of mine you ne'er again ſhall ſee
A ſingle groat.

The man who leaves his native coaſt,
Entic'd by Lucre's ſelfiſh call,
And truſts upon the ſeas his little all,
Oft counts without his hoſt:
Or riſes but to fall.
So he that leaves his quiet ſeat,
In hopes at Court to become great,
The ſubſtance for the ſhadow quits:
He'll meet more rubs than hits,
And wail his folly when too late.

Bewilder'd Men, for ever blind!
To truſt to Courts, or to the Wind,

FABLE

FABLE LXXXIV.

The RAT and the ELEPHANT.

AN Elephant was paſſing by,
In all the Eaſtern pomp of ſhew;
He was not wont ſo fine to go,
But as upon his back three ſtory high,
The grand Sultana ſat,
Her dog, her monkey, and her cat,
Her good old woman, and her Poll beſide,
He ſtalk't along with more than common pride.
When, from amidſt the gazing crowd,
An envious Rat exclaim'd aloud.
What can they in that lump of fleſh admire?
Is it becauſe his head is ſo much higher?
Or that he ſtands upon more ground than we?

I vow

I vow and ſwear for me,
My ſhape genteel, tho' ſmall, I would not change
For one ſo very clumſy, huge and ſtrange;
But Men will always make a fuſs
About they know not what.
Much more he would have ſaid; but Puſs
With indignation mov'd,
Leap'd down, and prov'd
The difference 'twixt the Elephant and Rat.

The tale thus told, now for the application.
A Gallic Author ſays, I wiſh 'twas true,
That ſelf-conceit's peculiar to his nation;
Good Engliſh folks, pray what ſay you?
Who ape, deſpiſe, yet ſtill remain
As light as France, as proud as Spain.

FABLE LXXXV.

The two STATUES.

To Mr. ROUQUET.

TELL me, ingenious friend ROUQUET,
Did ever you know Poet yet,
But who ſome famous Painter had in view?
I modeſtly take place amongſt the beſt,
SWIFT, DRYDEN, PRIOR, POPE, and all the reſt;
And for my KNELLER call on you.
Could I like thee but make my title true,
In after ages I might ſtand the teſt:
Immortal! rang'd amongſt the happy few,
Who ne'er ſo old, are always new.
Let others raiſe their voice and boldly tell,
How WILLIAM fought, and how the Rebels fell.

For themes so high, my Muse is much too faint
GLOVER may sing the man, and ROUQUET paint.
Enough for me, if in these moral lays,
With birds and beasts, I can instruct, and please.
I dash a little satire now and then:
But that is when I talk of Men.

In ancient days, or days of yore,
A hundred times,
To make out rhimes,
Thus have I said before.
But that's a privilege APOLLO grants,
Which each poor Poet uses as he wants.
It happen'd then in ancient days,
(You'll find I take which rhime I please)
That 'twas resolv'd by some good people,
In honour of St. GEORGE, a church to raise:
And with his Statue crown the Steeple.

Two

Two Sculptors were employ'd, who had the knack
Of chipping marble into life;
Some PHIDIAS or ſome ROUBILLAC,
Or he who of an Image made a Wife.
And to avoid all noiſe and ſtrife,
It was in articles ſet down,
That he whoſe work was judg'd the beſt,
Beſides the honour and renown,
Should claim a certain ſum expreſt.
But he who fail'd, inſtead of gains,
Might take his labour for his pains.
Pride, Int'reſt, Emulation,
Incite our Artiſts to the taſk.
With men of talents, I would aſk
What ſpur like Reputation?
The Statues now are both completed:
And in ſome public place were ſeated,
Expos'd to view, to all who came,
To gain applauſe or ſuffer blame.

One was admir'd by every curious eye:
The other ſneer'd at by each ſtander by.
What charms! what beauties! in the firſt were found
Proportions juſt! Expreſſion true!
The Drap'ry flowing, eaſy, new!
The Contours graceful, ſoft and round!
The ſecond, like an unlick'd Bear,
Had neither form, nor mein, nor air.
Wherefore, by all, it was agreed
The firſt ſhould have the price decreed.
Hold, ſaid the other, why this haſte?
Are not the Statues to be plac'd,
Where yonder ſteeple meets the ſkies?
Firſt fix them there,
And then declare,
Which beſt deſerves the prize.
The labour, ſcaffolding, and coſt,
Were look'd upon as ſo much loſt.

But

But when the half-form'd Image, fixt on high,
Was in its proper place:
Moulded to ſhape, and ſoft'ned into grace,
it drew on every ſide th' admiring eye.
Whilſt th' other loſt each beauty quite;
By diſtance, dwindled out of ſight.

Thy works, my Friend, where art and nature join,
nforce the tale, and make the moral thine.
When in the enamell'd miniature I view,
What e'er thy pencil draws,
The Lord, the Cit, to all ſo true,
The portrait ſpeaks, and claims applauſe.
Or if ſome DELIA I behold,
Tho' ſet in diamonds and in gold,
'Tis thee alone I prize;
Spite of the gold and diamond's blaze,
Thy art preſerves the ſparkling rays,
Of her ſtill brighter eyes.

When SILVIA, now no more unkind,
Had ſeal'd thoſe vows which lovers bind;
And DAMON ſees his picture plac'd,
Cloſe to the charmer's lovely waſte,
What raptures! fire his mind?
But oh! when on the mournful widow's arm,
In bracelet bonds, the dear deceas'd appears:
She views with ſighs, what us'd to charm;
And wets the well-known image with her tears.

Now ſhould theſe maſter works of art,
That move with grief, or joy, the heart,
Be tied with ribbons, near ſome chimney top,
Where Indian monſters form a china ſhop,
What would avail thy genius, ſkill, and grace?
A RAPHAEL's loſt, if out of place.

FABLE LXXXVI.

The WOLF and the MASTIFF.

A Prowling Wolf, reduc'd to ſkin and bone,
(So well the dogs had kept the watch)
Was on the ſculk ſome prey to catch,
When he perceiv'd a Maſtiff all alone;
Fat, ſleek, and plump, but ſtout withal:
And much he wiſh'd upon his ſkirts to fall;
But fear'd an equal match.
In prudence therefore deem'd it beſt,
To ſcreen his thoughts; then thus the Dog addreſt.
Dear Sir, how is it you contrive
To look ſo well, and have ſo ſmooth a hide?
It does one good, I ſwear, to ſee your face.
I ſoon will teach you how to thrive,

The friendly Dog reply'd,
And be in full as good a caſe,
And really oft I've wonder'd! why
You and your brothers are ſo ſhy!
Poor devils always on the hunt for meat;
Who faſt three days, for one they eat!
Come, come along with me, and try
A better fate.
What muſt I do? reſum'd the wolf, to earn
This happy change? ſpeak: for I long to learn.
Why, 'tis a very eaſy matter;
Little or nothing, ſaid the Dog, perhaps
To drive away the beggars from our ſcraps;
And then the folks at home, to kiſs and flatter.
For which you'll meet ſincere returns;
With many a nice and dainty bit beſide.
Haſte, quoth the Wolf, my boſom burns
With tranſports, which I can no longer hide;

O I could almoſt cry,
For Joy.
So ſaying, on the Maſtiff's neck he ſpied
Some places, that look'd bare.
How's this! my friend, you've loſt ſome hair.
My collar is the cauſe on't, when I'm tied.
Tied! ſaid the Wolf, what can't you then,
Go where you pleaſe? and when?
Not always ſo; but what of that?
What! pawn my freedom for a cruſt or bone!
Reply'd the Wolf, in haſty tone!
Much good may do your collar, and your fat,
Who'd buy the World, with loſs of liberty?
Welcome the woods, and welcome poverty.
Methinks my neck the collar feels!
So ſcour'd away; nor ſcarce could truſt his heels.

FABLE

FABLE LXXXVII.

The FOOTMAN and his Young MASTER.

JOHN follow'd his young maſter to the college,
To pick up wenches, and improve his knowledge.
And intimate as cup and can,
Were young ſquire RICHARD and his man.
Fathers and Maſters were, of courſe,
The ſubject of their learn'd diſcourſe;
How hard, ſaid JOHN, is my ſad caſe!
A Briton born, and be a ſlave.
Oh! had I ſlept within my grave,
Ere I was forc'd to go to place!
As for example, there's your father,
My Maſter, or my Tyrant rather,

For

For who ſays Maſter, Tyrant ſays, no doubt;
As I ſhall plainly make it out.
I ſay that maſters are a ſort
Of things, that make the world their ſport:
Proud, churliſh, overbearing, gruff,
Who think they're made of other ſtuff
Than us, whom they their ſervants call;
And yet GOD knows, we one and all,
Maids, chambermaids, grooms, footmen, Sir and Madam,
All ſprung from goody EVE, and gaffar ADAM.
Ah JOHN! reply'd the hopeful ſpark,
How thou art groping in the dark,
To prove 'tis twelve a clock at noon!
Of which thou'lt be convinc'd of ſoon;
For what is thy diſtreſs to my diſaſter?
He is my father and thy maſter:
But then he is my father and my maſter too;
And for a plague, you know that one will do.

Morning

Morning and evening, reprimanding!
To mind our books and morals mend;
Expecting from our underſtanding,
What their grey hairs ſcarce comprehend.
And then take care!
And Oh! beware,
Amongſt what company you fall,
Avoid all riots, noiſe and ſtrife,
And moſt ridiculous of all!
To lead a ſober life.
Quoth JOHN, there's reaſon in your plea;
Your caſe is bad, I needs muſt ſay.
'Tis true that fathers, ſtubborn in their will,
Are often to their Sons uncivil;
Yet they are fathers ſtill:
But maſters are the Devil,
So long as they together dwell'd,
This was the topic which they held.

It happned ſome years after, more or leſs,
They parted. And we find in time's proceſs
That JOHN grew rich. To tell you how! and when!
Is not my buſineſs here. Let us ſuppoſe,
From footman he to ſteward roſe:
And where's the wonder then?
His ſtate and title both were grown much higher:
No more plain JOHN, 'twas JOHN A NOKES, Eſquire,
With horſe and hounds, and ſervants of each kind;
And rides within, where once he rode behind.

Long time ere this, our youth was fixt in life:
Had loſt his father, and had got a wife,
Had ſons and daughters half a ſcore,
And ſtill his ſpouſe a breeding more.
His old acquaintance JOHN grown rich and grand,
Had promis'd for the next to ſtand.
He was accepted, there's no queſtion,

For

For, by the by,
The Goſſips fees are grown ſo high,
Few people care to make a chriſtian.
The thing perform'd, and dinner done,
As o'er the bowl they ſmoaking ſat,
They now revers'd their former chat.
For of all plagues, beneath the ſun,
With which mankind was curſt,
Servants, and children, were the worſt.
Quoth th' upſtart ſquire, Domeſtics, you muſt own,
Are more to be deſpis'd the more they 're known,
A race of men, pert, pilfering, lying, lazy,
Enough to make the wiſeſt body crazy.
A ſwarm of locuſts in a field of graſs,
The troops that thro' a conquer'd country paſs,
Not half the waſte, as theſe vile vermin ſpread:
Who hate their maſters whilſt they eat their bread:
What's this? the other cry'd, to children, pray?

When

When ſervants are diſlik'd, they're turn'd away.
But ſons and daughter are deſign'd,
Eternally to fret a parent's mind.
In vain for them we hoard, and ſcrape, and ſave;
They count our years and wiſh us in the grave.
Thus both forgetting former days,
What then their cenſure, now's their praiſe.

Who undertakes to alter human kind,
A taſk ſhall ſurely find,
That will be left undone.
'Tis not the maſter, ſervant, father, ſon,
Twirl'd by each paſſion's guſt,
Ambition, avarice, or luſt:
It is the Man that is to blame,
In every ſtate of life the ſame,
Unthinking, fickle, and unjuſt.

FABLE

FABLE LXXXVIII.

The Ass in a Lyon's skin.

DREST in a Lyon's skin, an Ass, we're told,
Appear'd so terrible, so fierce and bold,
That all the country round about,
Was struck with panic fears.
The Miller chanc'd to spy his ears,
And with an oaken stick soon thrash'd him out.

How many Bullies, I could quote,
Remind us of this skin;
With fierce cock'd hat, and gold lac'd coat:
Lyon without, mere Ass within.

FABLE LXXXIX.

APOLLO, MERCURY, and the SHEPHERD.

TWO ſons of JUPITER, we read
APOLLO and MERCURIUS,
Both of the true Olympian breed,
Tho' ſome have ſaid they're ſpurious.
('Twixt you and I 'tis no bad thing,
To be the Natural of a King,)
But that is not the queſtion now.
I only mean to tell you how
Theſe GODS a conteſt had, of old;
Who faireſt ſtood in Man's eſteem:
The truth was dificult t' unfold,
For Men are ſeldom what they ſeem.

Let us, quoth HERMES, put it to the teſt;
And each his different arts employ.
Your goodneſs 'gainſt my malice try;
And ſee which anſwers beſt.
And he who firſt a ſacrifice obtains,
The wager gains.
With all my heart, reply'd APOLLO,
As paſſions guide, ſo man will follow.
The point thus ſettled and agreed,
APOLLO ſpied a careful ſwain,
Who led his bleating flock to feed,
Along the verdant plain.
There was not one, in all the county,
On whom more fit to try his bounty;
A heart ſo honeſt muſt o'erflow,
At ſight of what he would beſtow.
The God then plac'd upon the ground
A Stone, on which theſe words were found.

"Beneath this mark, a golden treaſure lies;
"APOLLO gives it, take it, and be wiſe."
A treaſure! cry'd th' enraptur'd ſwain,
Grant heaven, th' inſcription may be true!
Then rais'd the ſtone, with much ado,
And found his labour not in vain.
Amaz'd at th' unexpected ſtore,
He firſt began to count it o'er;
And then,
He counts it o'er and o'er again;
Can ſcarce believe his doubtful eyes,
But ne'ertheleſs ſecures the prize.
Adieu his crook, farewel his flocks.
How are the funds? how go the ſtocks?
No other cares his thoughts employ.
'Tis future grandeur! future joy!
Nor ever once came in his mind,
To thank the God, that was ſo kind.

It chanc'd, the Deity of ſtealth
Found out the place where lay the Wealth.
No need to tell what trick he play'd;
He wanted neither ax nor ſpade.
A God commands all things at pleaſure;
So conjur'd up, and ſtole the treaſure
Soon as the Shepherd ſaw the neſt forſaken,
And all the money flown;
And read theſe words, engrav'd upon a ſtone,
"APOLLO gave and MERCURY has taken;"
He tore his hair, and beat his breaſt,
Then thus th' Olympian thief addreſt.
"O ſon of MAÏA liſten to my prayer:
"Take me, O take me to thy guardian care.
"Direct me how thy anger to appeaſe,
"And I'll an altar to thy glory raiſe.
"Behold, my favourite Lambkin dies!
"O! may it prove a grateful ſacrifice.

HERMES gave no assenting nod;
But turning to his brother God,
The Victim bleeds; the thing is done:
You see, APOLLO, I have won.

With Int'rest there's no competition;
Love, Honour, Duty, all
Before that Idol fall.
Such is of Man the frail condition.

FABLE XC.

MINOS and the MISER.

WHat, ſtill ſome avaritious wretch in view!
And ſtill with ſcourge in hand in vain purſue!
When Vice is ſtubborn, Satire muſt be ſo:
Like a true Maſtiff fierce and bold,
That never quits his hold,
Till he is kill'd, or kills his foe.
All this is mighty well indeed;
But 'tis in vain you throw the dart.
Inſenſibility will never ſmart:
Nor can you make a Miſer bleed.
Who e'er attempts to ſet him right,
As well might ſtrive to ſnuff the moon;
You waſte your paper and your ſpite,

For

For could he get one penny by't,
He'd thank you for the kind lampoon.
No matter: I once more will try;
And if I loſe my time,
There's no great crime,
He is to blame, not I.

Reclin'd upon his golden ſtore,
A Miſer dy'd for very want;
He would not from his treaſure grant,
To ſave his life, a farthing more.
A farthing was enough, to pay
His paſſage to the Stygian ſhore;
And that was all he took away.
And what his heirs begrudg'd him too,
As more than to his mem'ry due.
Our muckworn Shade arrives, where CHARON ply'd;
Who with the but end of his oar,

Still puſh'd ſuch wretched ſouls aſide,
As could not pay their ferry o'er.
What does our Grub in this ſad plight?
Unable to give up his laſt dear mite,
He boldly jump'd into the tide;
Determin'd in his mind, to cheat
Old CHARON of his freight,
And fairly ſwam to t' other ſide.
When CERB'RUS ſaw th' unlicens'd ghoſt,
He vollied out a triple roar:
Which brought down crowds along th' infernal coaſt,
To ſee what ne'er was ſeen before.
Sudden the Furies ſeize the wretch,
And drag him to the Judge of Hell's domain;
Then without loſs of time,
Joyous they haſte, the Rack to fetch:
To puniſh an unheard of crime,
With ſome uncommon pain,

What

What cruel torments ſhall he feel?
The rolling ſtone, the vultur, or the wheel?
No, no: ſaid MINOS, none of thoſe will do;
Hell has no torture great enough in ſtore:
But I have one in view,
To plague him ten times more.
Unbar the adamantine gate. Depart,
Vile Wretch: I'll gall thee to the heart.
Be gone; and in the other world, behold
Thy ſpendthrift heirs diſperſe thy gold.

FABLE

FABLE XCI.

The ROE, the CROW, the TORTOISE and the RAT.

THE nimble Roe,
And Tortoiſe ſlow,
With nibbling Rat, and well wing'd Crow,
In ſtricteſt friendſhip liv'd.
The Story's told ſome thouſand years ago,
And things ſo old muſt ſurely be believ'd.
They choſe for their retreat,
A pretty comfortable ſeat,
Safe as they hop'd from tyrannous Mankind.
But is there ought,
On Earth, in Sea, in Air, in act or thought

But

But what thoſe prying linxes find?
It chanc'd one day, the ſmall ſhank'd Dame went out
To taſte the freſhneſs of the morning air;
And as unwarily ſhe friſkt about,
She fell into a ſnare.
A Hound, that fawning thing,
Which learns of Man to fetch and bring;
Had trac'd her ſcent: then hied away,
T' inform his maſter of the prey.
'Twas dinner time. Where's ſiſter Roe?
We are but three! cry'd out the Crow.
Ah Brother! ſaid Dame Tortoiſe, in a fright,
Avert, ye Gods! the thing I dread:
Poor Roe is either catch'd or dead.
Could I like you but wing my flight,
Ere this I ſhould be out of ſight,
In queſt of her whoſe loſs we rue;
Her feet have ſlipt, her heart is true.

Away

Away flew Crow, and as it was surmis'd
Fast in the net he found their friend surpris'd.
He stay'd not to enquire with idle chat
With how and when? and where and what?
As schoolful talking Pedants do;
But back again with speed he flew,
To know how to proceed,
And by what means their sister might be freed.
The time was short; and so in brief,
It was agreed
The Rat and Crow should haste to her relief,
And Tortoise she keep house; for with her pace
Roe would be nabb'd, e'er she could reach the place,
But, No:
She was uneasy in her mind,
And needs would go
To help dear sister Roe;
And so, went puffing, creeping on, behind.

The

The Rat by this had ſet the priſoner free.
When lo!
The hunter comes, in hope of ſomewhat good.
Away they ſcamper; Crow upon a tree,
Rat in a hole, and Roe into the wood.
What, have I loſt my dinner then! he cry'd.
But in that moment he eſpy'd
The tardy creature coming up;
At leaſt I'll not to bed before I ſup.
So ſaid, he ſeiz'd her by the back,
And tied her cloſe within his ſack.
Good Tort had ſurely gone to pot;
When Roe, pretending to be lame;
Limp'd forth. The hunter, for the chace quite hot,
Laid down his certain heavy lot,
Charm'd at the proſpect of a double game,
And ſo purſu'd; but ſuch a dance ſhe led
As gave the nibbler time to clear their friend,

Secure

Secure themſelves, and ſend
The Huntſman ſupperleſs to bed.

Then O what extaſy! to meet again,
After a day of perils, and of pain.
Such Joys! by real friends are gueſt,
Joys that are felt, but not expreſt!
And oh! what pity 'tis, ſuch friends to find
Amidſt the Brutes: and not amongſt Mankind.

FABLE XCII.

HERCULES and the WAGGONER.

THE Pha'ton of a loaded waggon,
Stop'd ſhort, 'tis ſaid, upon the way;
Nor could his twice three horſes drag on,
So faſt he ſtuck, deep in the clay.
'Tis what one would not have expected,
Where turnpikes are by law erected.
It happen'd near a friend of mine's abode;
The Lord preſerve you, if you go that road.

Our waggoner, to give him his plain name,
Began to ſwear, if not blaſpheme,
Curſt ruts and cart, himſelf, then whipt his team,
But all in vain!

One

One inch of ground he could not gain.
In this diſtreſs, he to the Gods apply'd;
Great HERCULES! thy ſuccour I implore,
O! add to thy exploits one labour more---
When ſudden, from above, a voice reply'd.
ALCMENA's ſon has heard thy prayer,
And takes thee to his guardian care.
But then it is his ſtrict command,
That thou ſhould'ſt lend a helping hand.
Widen that rut---remove that ſtone---
Now take thy whip---the thing is done.
O HERCULES! thy power this wonder proves;
I thank thee for thy aid---my Waggon moves.

When thus, the voice again the clown addreſt,
Firſt help thyſelf, and Heaven will do the reſt.

FABLE XCIII.

The HUNTER after FORTUNE.

THere liv'd two Friends, in perfect bliſs,
I really cannot tell you where,
But to be ſure if not on this,
It was on th' other Hemiſphere.
One of the two, who had a reſtleſs mind,
Propos'd in foreign climes to roam;
Or elſe they ne'er ſhould Fortune find.
Was ever Prophet yet that ſtay'd at home?
Go ſeek your Fortune if you will:
His friend with prudence made reply,
For my part I ſhall here ſit ſtill,
Content with what I now enjoy.
Away the trav'ller poſts o'er vale and hill,

Resolv'd his luck to try.
Our story says, that he arriv'd
At some King's Court, where most folks thriv'd
There he began his schemes to lay,
How to be plac'd in Fortune's way:
Ne're miss'd a Levee, never out of sight,
He danc'd attendance, morning, noon and night:
But all in vain; whether by chance or whim,
The freakish Goddess favour'd all but him.
Then farewell Courts, ye Courtiers all, adieu;
I'll be no longer of the servile crew.
Since Merit's not rewarded here,
Some other way my course I'll steer.
To Pekin or Peru let's go,
Where mines of gold and silver grow;
Perhaps at last the wind may veer.
So said, on board he's strait convey'd;
The ship's unmoor'd, the anchor's weigh'd.

O hard'ned man! that in a bark ſo frail,
Firſt dar'd the deep, and ſet the ſail!
What will not mortals do for gain?
O'er what Ambition not prevail?
And now the ſtorm upheaves the main,
A thouſand deaths at once aſſail;
Our Rover's heart began to fail;
And to be plain,
He wiſh'd himſelf at home again.
Howe'er the tempeſt ceas'd: he got on ſhore.
What mov'd thy mind theſe regions to explore?
Fortune, I'm told, has fix'd her dwelling here;
Pray be ſo kind to ſhew me where.
And did you venture thus the ſeas to croſs,
In hopes to catch the wayward Dame?
Then know, fond fool, that to your loſs,
You may return from whence you came.
She has been gone this year or more.

Remember, you who hunt for ſtore,
That rolling ſtones ne'er gather moſs.
And have I then expos'd myſelf? he cry'd,
To all the dangers of the Seas?
Led by Ambition, Avarice and Pride,
Oh! would propitious Heaven pleaſe
That I once more may greet my native home,
I ne'er again abroad will roam:
Nor more with Fortune be at odds.
So ſaid, he ſpied the wiſh'd-for Dome,
Where dwelt his Houſehold Gods;
And wiſely meditating in his mind,
How he would live, content in his own ſphere;
At his friend's door who ſhould he find?
Fortune herſelf---ſhe waited for him there.

Shew me the Man, pleas'd with his own eſtate;
That does not after Fortune ſeek.

The rich, the poor, the proud, the meek,
All for her favours ſearch, or wait;
Favours which ſhe beſtows on very few.
If you, perchance, ſhould catch this child of fate,
I know you'll claim her as your due;
But be not too elate:
Juſt when you think to graſp the fickle Dame,
She thro' your fingers ſlips;
Away ſhe trips,
And leaves you worſe, or juſt the ſame.
Here is a fellow, you will ſay,
Carried a knapſack th' other day,
In wretched diſmal dirty plight;
And now, forſooth, he's dubb'd a Knight!
Say, why is Fate to him ſo kind?
Have we not to that honour more pretence?
No doubt: but what would you conclude from thence?
Pray is not Fortune blind?

For all the wealth that India brings,
The pomp of Courts, the power of Kings,
My peace of mind I would not barter.
Fortune will fly thoſe who purſue;
Affect indifference, ſhe'll come to:
It is her Sex's charter.

FABLE XCIV.

The FOX, the CAT and the SPIDER.

REynard and Puſs one evening took a walk,
And like good folks held forth in pious talk.
How beautiful was virtue! how divine!
In all our deeds, let Truth and Juſtice ſhine;
And keep the golden rule in eye,
To do, as we would be done by:
No doubt the moral's very fine!
But ſo it is, in man and beaſt,
Who moſt pretends performs the leaſt.
Whilſt thus our Devotees, in converſe good,
Beguil'd the time away,
A Wolf ſprang from a neighbouring wood,
And made a Lamb his prey;

And ſpite, of all his little bleating cries,
Devour'd the harmleſs thing before their eyes.
Ah! cry'd Grimalkin, what a horrid deed!
Why to appeaſe his hungry maw,
Muſt that poor Lambkin bleed?
He might on roots or acorns feed;
And not embrue his rav'nous jaw,
Againſt all right, againſt all law.
But Reynard, mov'd with zealous warmth, went further;
And preach'd againſt the crying ſin of murther.
For what ſtill heighten'd more the guilt,
The blood of Innocents was ſpilt.
Thus full of morals, full of prate,
As paſſing by a farm-yard gate,
A plump fat hen, too prone to ſtray,
By luckleſs ſtars fell in their way.
The Fox his ſermon quite forgot,
And plump Dame Partlet went to pot.

'Tis

'Tis ſaid, there was a Chicken too
That ſhar'd its mother's fate;
But that by heat-ſay I relate:
The thing, tho' likely, may n't be true.
But this I can affirm, and do:
The Cat that very time eſpy'd
A Mouſe; and then what ſignify'd
Or brute or human law?
Virtue, 'tis ſaid, is known when try'd;
But Nature never goes aſide:
Puſs grip'd the prey, and clos'd her paw.

Squat, in the center of her cob-web net,
A Spider on the watch, ſome food to get,
Beheld, with deteſtation and ſurpriſe,
Their barb'rous acts;
Nor could ſhe have believ'd the facts,
But that ſhe muſt believe her eyes.

Reflecting

Reflecting thus, ſome vagrant flies
Were catch'd, entangled in her toils;
When ſoon ſhe ſuck'd their blood as lawful ſpoils;
And left a theme, for Man to moraliſe!
For Man, ſo juſt, ſo virtuous, and ſo wiſe!
Who, ſtill, to this or that lays blame,
And yet on like occaſion does the ſame.

Thus thro' the world, from eldeſt time,
Each found fault with his brother;
What in ourſelves we think no crime,
Is ſhocking in another.

FABLE

FABLE XCV.

The EAGLE and the OWL.

AN Eagle and an Owl, tir'd with their wars,
In which they nothing got but ſcars,
Concluded peace; or rather a convention.
And 'twas by ſecret articles agreed,
Not proper to the world to mention,
Each other to ſupport in caſe of need.
And to remove the bone of all contention,
From that day forth, both might in ſafety breed.
The thing ſeems ſettled well, indeed;
Sagacious ſpoke MINERVA's bird;
But did you e'er my little Owlets ſee?
Not I, upon my royal word;
So much the worſe for mine and mé:

If in your way my young ones fall,
Spite of our treaty I ſhall loſe them all.
You are a King! and Kings and Gods, we know,
Make no diſtinctions 'mongſt us folks below!
Should mine eſcape your claws, 'twill be a wonder!
Your apprehenſions are unjuſt,
Reply'd the bearer of Jove's thunder;
You wrong my honour with diſtruſt.
No, no: deſcribe your children, and be ſure,
For any harm, from me, they are ſecure.
Why, quoth the Owl, my babes are very fair;
The prettieſt poppets that you ever ſaw,
(Pray mind the picture which I draw)
A ſmiling countenance, a noble air---
Jewels in ſhort without a flaw;
You can't miſtake, the likeneſs is ſo true.
It ſo befell our Owl, in ſeaſon due,
Her young ones hatch'd; and as, one day,

The

The Eagle roam'd about for prey,
Within the hollow of a blaſted oak,
He ſpy'd the little monſtrous brood;
Their hideous mein, their ſhocking croak,
Convinc'd him they were lawful food!
Theſe ſqualid creatures cannot be
The children of my friend, ſaid he;
Nauſeous they are, no doubt, at beſt!
But may eat better than they look:
So one by one the Owlets took,
Till he unbirded all the neſt.
The Owl, who for ſome food had been in queſt,
Return'd; when, O ſad ſight! ſhe found
Legs, wings, and tails, ſtrew'd on the ground;
Of her dear babes the bleeding reſt!
A parent's grief is not to be expreſt:
Therefore, as 'tis the prudent way,
We'll drop the veil, and only ſay,

'Tis

'Tis fitteſt to be gueſs'd.
And now, ſhe calls for vengeance on her fod;
When thus, a voice ſpoke from above,
Thou art the ſole contriver of thy woe:
For had thy brats one ſingle feature,
Like them thou painted to the bird of Jove?
Then blame thyſelf, or rather blame true nature,
That makes you partial to what e'er you love:
For as you like or diſapprove,
The thing is quite a diff'rent creature.

FABLE XCVI.

The DUCK, the BRAMBLE, and the BAT.

A Bramble-bush, a Bat, a Duck,
Went out to trade in foreign parts;
For tho' at home they had no luck
They might succeed at other marts.
They had their Agents and their Factors,
Their Correspondents and Transactors,
Books of account, where *Debt* and *Cred*
Stood opposite, in black and red.
Besides drawbacks, and bills of lading,
With other implements of trading,
The business went on, smooth and well;

Their

Their ſtock encreaſing every day.
But who can tell
When Fortune comes how long ſhe'll ſtay?
Alas! their's ſoon was caſt away;
Well they might grieve they did embark it!
For ſhip, and freight, and bottom'ry,
All, to the bottom of the ſea,
Went down to NEPTUNE's market.
At which they vented many a groan—
Oh no! they vented none.
For who but knows, from wholeſale dealers
Down to the ſmalleſt ſhop retailers,
All thoſe in trade, who meet with croſſes,
To ſave their credit hide their loſſes.
Thoſe of our Partners were ſo great,
There was no ſtealing a retreat.
'Twas advertis'd in the Gazette,
Their goods to ſell, their houſe to let.

The

The Creditors, of courſe, call for their due;
The principal and int'reſt too.
Then how behave in ſuch a caſe?
For who can look a Dun in face?
They had but one card left to play,
Which was, t' amuſe in hopes of pay.
The Bramble ſet in the hedge-row,
Hook'd all that paſs'd, or to or fro;
And cry'd, we'll pay you all we owe:
Full twenty ſhillings in the pound,
If what we've loſt ſhould e'er be found.
But theſe were little more than catches;
For all was gone to pot,
And nothing to be got,
But ſcratches.
And now more creditors appear.
The Duck began to quack her fear.
If all be ſunk, as there's no doubt,

I'll dive, ſaid ſhe, and find it out.
(For 'twas the dread of houſe of ſpunging,
That taught the Duck the art of plunging)
As for the Bat, perplext
And vex't,
He ſtill was in more woeful plight;
By Duns purſu'd, by Bailiffs dodg'd,
All day in ſome cloſe hole he lodg'd,
And ne'er ſtirr'd out, whilſt light.

There's many a debtor, I could quote,
That's neither Duck, nor Bat, nor Bramble-hedge,
But things of faſhion, and of note,
That claim the ſhameful right of privilege;
And ſome there are, not ſo ſecure,
Who all day long keep out of ſight;
And like the Bat ſteal forth at night,
By ſome back door.

FABLE XCVII.

The ADVENTURER and the TREASURE.

A Knight, we read (tho' Authors claſh)
Once ſallied forth adventures to explore;
Not as Knight-errants did, in times of yore,
With one Squire only and no caſh.
Our Hero, who knew better things,
Was taught to lay down this poſition,
That Men and money were the things,
On which depends an expedition.
He therefore took of both, 'tis ſaid,
And as along he chac'd for prey,
To ſuccour Dames, and Giants ſlay,
Theſe words, upon a rock engrav'd, were read.
" Deep in the earth a treaſure lies,

" Hid from the light of day;
" Who e'er would gain the glorious prize,
" Thro' me muſt hew his way."
Away to work they go,
With pick-ax and with crow.

What will not conſtancy atchieve?
It ſoftens Damſels hearts, more hard, by far,
Than marble, flint, or diamonds are;
Tho' 'tis what ſome folks can't conceive.
And now the rock is pierc'd quite thro',
But yet the treaſure's ne'r the nearer;
Knight-errants pay for things much dearer.
For lo! a precipice appears in view,
Where t'was inſcrib'd upon a poſt,
" The money lies on th' other coaſt;
" Which no advent'rer can obtain,
" Till this gulph's levell'd to a plain."
After much labour, and much coſt,
The gulph is fill'd, the plain is croſt!

'Twas

'Twas time th' adventures now were ended;
For all the money was expended.
But ſtill new obſtacles ariſe.
A Dragon guards the golden prize;
Which by the Knight muſt be ſurmounted,
Before the treaſure could be counted.
I'll try, quoth he, what I can do.
My purſe is empty; that's too true.
But I have all my courage left:
Of that no Knight can be bereft.
When honour calls, I am the man.
He ſpoke: and on the Dragon ran.
To paint each blow and ſtreaming gaſh,
From noſe and mouth the flames that flaſh,
Demands the pen that did indite
The actions of La Mancha's Knight.
We'll ſay then, after many a flaſh,
The Dragon lay, as 'twas but meet,

A breathleſs carcaſe at his feet.
Not that our Hero came off clear;
The vict'ry coſt him very dear.
And many a wound left many a ſcar,
The marks of honour and th' effects of war.
At length the treaſure's found: they count it o'er.
And what d' you think was in the purſe?
Penny for penny, leſs nor more,
The very ſum he had before;
And well it was no worſe,
For when contending Princes fight,
For private pique, or public right;
Armies are rais'd, the fleets are man'd.
They combat both by ſea and land.
When after many battles paſt,
Both tir'd with blows make peace at laſt.
What is it after all each Nation gets?
Why---Widows, taxes, wooden-legs, and debts.

FABLE XCVIII.

The MAN and the HORSE.

AS on the road Ball chanc'd to trip,
His angry maſter gave the whip.
The gen'rous beaſt indignant burn'd,
And thus, in plaints, th' affront return'd:
When I was born! what planet ſhed
Its baleful influence o'er my head?
A life of ſervices forgot!
Scourg'd, kick't and whipt! and all for what?
For one ſmall ſlip. O! were Men whipt
And Women too, each time they tript!
The Lord have mercy on their hide,
For who could birch enough provide.
Why how now, ſaucy pert John Trot,

Where did you learn to know what's what?
If things are come to ſuch a paſs,
We ſhall have reaſoning from an Aſs.
Why not? reſum'd the Horſe again;
Is reaſon then confin'd to Men?
I know 'tis what you mortals claim:
Tho' oft you prove 'tis but a name.
By every whirl of paſſion toſt,
'Tis in a cup of liquor loſt:
Or if by CUPID's arts betray'd,
You call this reaſon to your aid,
What torments then muſt you endure?
It tears the heart it came to cure.
No doubt, it was at firſt deſign'd,
By heaven, to guide all human kind.
But Man perverſe will go aſtray;
So, whilſt his paſſions lead the way,
His Reaſon lags behind.

When

When did you ever ſee brute Creature,
Turn from the deſtin'd paths of Nature?
Then call it inſtinct, what you will,
But yet, I ſay, 'tis reaſon ſtill.
For if th' effects are both the ſame,
'Tis but diſputing on a name;
So take th' advantage of a word,
To draw a conſequence abſurd.
Wherefore if your indulgence pleaſes
To hear a tale, I'll prove my Theſis.

Two hungry Rats, in ſearch of meat,
Perceiv'd an Egg, and ſpite of hens and cocks,
Reſolv'd to have a treat;
But juſt as they ſat down to eat,
Who ſhould approach? but Maſter Fox!
In this diſtreſs, how ſave their prey?
They could not with it run away;

To

To leave it was not their intention.
Then how convey ſuch brittle fare?
Of that you'll find they took great care;
Neceſſity's the mother of Invention.
For leſt the egg ſhould break or crack,
One of them lay upon his back,
(Such wiſe precautions ſeldom fail)
Then 'twixt his legs the booty plac'd,
Which gently he embrac'd,
Whilſt th' other drag'd him by the tail.
Thus after many a rub and jog,
They got home ſafe and eat their prog.

This fact allow'd, deny it if you can,
I ſay that brutes reflect as well as Man:
Nor need Logicians, ſure, the queſtion beg,
To ſhew 'twas force of reaſoning ſav'd their egg.

When

When 'midſt the fields, in queſt of food,
The patridge leads her unfledg'd brood,
Should ſhe the fowler ſee approaching,
With gun or net in ſearch of game;
(Her danger is you know the ſame,
Be it by ſporting or by poaching)
How does ſhe act in this extream?
She feigns herſelf both maim'd and lame;
Then from her co'vy hobbling far away,
She draws the Fowler and his Setter.
Who follow cloſe the crippled prey,
And ſurely think to get her.
But when ſhe knows her young ones ſafe, in th' air
Aloof ſhe ſprings, and leaves the hunters there,
With open mouth, and ſtupid ſtare!
Could LOCKE or PLATO reaſon better?

Let

Let Reaſon then no longer be your pride;
Or make a better uſe on't, pray:
For which is beſt, do you decide,
Reaſon, that goes with Man aſtray?
Or Inſtinct, Brutes' unerring guide?

When from the tavern drunk you've come,
How oft have I convey'd you home,
With prudent care and cautious tread?
Then JOHN has tumbled you to bed.
Your life, perhaps, to me you owe,
When you could neither ſtand nor go.
Where was your boaſted Reaſon then?
Impertinent! reply'd the human brute;
And ſo to finiſh the diſpute,
He whipt poor Ball again.

FABLE XCIX.

MERCURY and the WOODMAN.

A Man, 'tis ſaid,
Whoſe only trade
Was that of felling wood,
By Fortune croſt,
His only hatchet loſt,
Of courſe his livelyhood.
" O! had you heard him make his moan!
" It would have mov'd a heart of ſtone.
For how ſupport a wretched life?
Maintain his children, and his wife?
O JOVE! he cry'd, then wept full ſore,
My Ax, my own dear Ax reſtore;
Or let thy providential hand,

That

That can at will all things command,
Another Ax beſtow:
The life you gave,
You then will ſave:
And I, a ſecond being owe.
Thus, pray'd he, proſtrate on the ground,
And ſpoke the thing he meant:
For Axes were not to be found,
As thick as hops in Kent.
When MERCURY from heaven deſcended,
With tydings that his griefs were ended,
Look up, ſaid he, thy ax behold!
And then preſented one of gold.
No; Heaven forbid that I ſhould own
What I've no right to claim;
Then one of ſilver he was ſhewn;
But ſtill the clown reply'd the ſame.
A third of ſteel, at laſt, came forth,

Which

Which often had his hands employ'd;
Ah! this is mine! the woodman cry'd,
All in the world that I am worth.
With grateful heart, the preſent I receive:
'Tis all the Gods require or Man can give.
Thy honeſty ſhall well rewarded be;
Reply'd Jove's meſſenger; here, take all three.

The Story far and near was told.
And all the woodmen round about,
Their axes loſt, and made a rout,
In hopes to have an ax of gold.
Jove was ſo peſter'd with their cries,
That Hermes left again the ſkies.
To each, who his ſad fate lamented,
The God a golden ax preſented!
And each had thought himſelf a fool,
Had he not own'd at once the tool.

'Tis

'Tis yours? quoth HERMES, with a frown.
Ay, that it is: all made reply.
It is? you say: then take it for your lye.
So with the but end knock'd them down.

Let honesty and truth, your actions guide.
What e'er just Heaven vouchsafes; by that abide.
He must be mad who bets against the odds.
Man may cheat Man: but can't deceive the Gods.

FABLE

FABLE C.

TRIBUTE ſent to ALEXANDER, by the BRUTES.

IN ancient times a Fable was in vogue:
There was great reaſon for't, no doubt.
I'll only tell the Apologue,
And you may find the Moral out.

The puff't cheek'd goddeſs with a hundred tongues,
With wings expanded, and with brazen lungs,
Around the world theſe ſummons blew;
One ALEXANDER, Son of JOVE, ſo call'd,
The human ſpecies having quite enthrall'd,
Would needs enſlave the brute creation too.

Enjoin both Birds and Beaſts, from high to low,
All that could fly or crawl or go,
To come and bend before his throne;
His laws receive, and puiſſance own.
O'er every lawn, thro' every wood,
The dire alarum ſpread.
Aghaſt! each creature ſtood:
For well they knew that nothing good
Could flow from ſuch a fountain's head.
Yet for the welfare of the Nation,
It was thought fit to call a meeting;
And take into conſideration,
The Monarch's meſſage, and his greeting;
In little ſenates greateſt noiſe is.
Opinious claſh, debate ariſes:
With Con and Pro,
And Aye and No;
But as in ſuch a deſp'rate criſis,

'Twere

'Twere folly, if not worſe, to wrangle,
And, Lawyer-like, the cauſe entangle;
'Twas deem'd the beſt and ſhorteſt way,
To make a fund, and tribute pay.
We are not told what means and ways,
The Beaſts went on, the ſum to raiſe.
Whether, as 'tis the cuſtom grown,
It was by lottery, or loan.
What e'er their methods, good or bad,
'Tis certain they the money had.
The thing was, who the treaſure ſhould convey:
And in what form, and ſtile, their homage pay.
Theſe weighty matters fix'd; it was agreed,
That ſuch as us'd to carry packs,
The Aſs, the Mule, the Camel, and the Steed,
Should load the treaſure on their backs.
And for Ambaſſador, we find,
They pitch'd upon the Ape;

As he reſembled moſt mankind,
In manners, and in ſhape.
All things thus ſettled, they ſat out.
A Lyon, who was on the ſcout,
No ſooner ſpy'd the caravan,
But ſtrait up to the foremoſt ran.
Well met, ſaid he, my truſty friends,
I ſee where your proceſſion tends;
My tribute too I likewiſe bring;
The preſent to be ſure is ſmall;
But as it is my all,
It may be welcome to the King.
I pray you, friends, then be ſo kind
That mine may with the reſt be join'd.
When diſincumber'd of my load,
I'll ſcare the thieves, and ſcour the road.
A Lyon's prayer is a command;
For tho' they wiſh'd him far away,

You clearly underſtand,
That none durſt mutter nay.
'Twas too much honour to the troop,
His Majeſty ſo low would ſtoop.
Then ſeeming friendly, all jogg'd on together,
Diſcourſing on important things:
How bad the times! how fine the weather!
The fall of leaves; and riſe of Kings!
Thus, as they ſhorten'd time and way,
They came to a delicious ſeat:
Such, if you mind what Poets ſay,
The Gods would chuſe for a retreat.
'Twas verdant lawns, ſequeſter'd glades,
With purling ſtreams, and cooling ſhades,
Proſpects delightful! views amazing!
And beſt of all, ten thouſand ſheep a grazing!
Here let me ſtop: the Lyon cry'd,
Here; by this River's ſide.

I'm on a ſudden ſeiz'd ſo very ill,
I needs muſt in this meadow ſtay.
You'll make the King my beſt excuſes, pray;
He's good! and for the deed will take the will.
But e'er you go away,
(As I may here ſome time remain)
Return my money back again.
So ſaid: the bags were all untied:
And ſoon as he the gold eſpy'd,
Bleſs me! quoth he,
What's this I ſee!
My ſtars! how 'tis encreas'd, and multiply'd!
The Principal and Product, both are mine:
Dear little rogues, how prettily they ſhine!
Then, if report ſays true,
He ſwept up all, both great and ſmall:
Or if not all,
He left but very few.

His

His fellow travellers ſaid nought; went on
To Macedon,
To make their plaints to JOVE's --- or PHILIP's Son,
I ne'er could learn what ALEXANDER ſaid;
It is preſum'd he only ſhook his head.
He had in politics, more ſkill,
Than to attack his royal brother;
For that were Lyon againſt Lyon ſtill:
And Pyrates never fight with one another.

FABLE CI.

The CARRIERS.

TWO Pidgeons, Carriers both by trade,
As in mid air they met one day,
Where in ſuch haſte? one to the other ſaid,
Let's reſt awhile beneath yon myrtle ſhade,
And talk an hour away.
Well, does thy Miſtreſs love my Maſter ſtill?
Aye that ſhe does---nay e'en againſt her will.
She ſends this note, 'tis payable at ſight,
Brimful of tenderneſs and love.
How know'ſt thou that, reply'd the brother Dove,
Thou that canſt nrither read nor write.
Why, as ſhe wrote I watch'd her eyes,
And every time ſhe dip'd her pen

Alternate paſſions ſeem'd to riſe:
She wrote and ſmil'd; then ſigh'd, and wrote again.
Which was, you know, as much to ſay,
Ah, DAMON! why this long delay?
You cannot ſure ungrateful prove:
And break the tender oaths you ſwore.
Falſe to your vows! and falſe to love!
And then repeated o'er,
What ſhe had ſaid ten times before.
Reproaching now, and now forgiving;
For, oh! without him there's no living!
And then reſolv'd to ſee him never:
Determin'd, as ſhe thought, to hate
The perjur'd baſe Ingrate ---
Yet love him more than ever.
The letter's long, but all it does impart
Was pen'd as ſwift as the direction;
For what flows truly from the heart

Ne'er

Ne'er waits for cold reflection.
If that's a rule, then DAMON's falſe. This note,
In anſwer to the laſt ſhe wrote,
Will leave no room to doubt it;
'Tis very ſhort --- and he was long about it.

A

But then theſe Pidgeons, ſays a Prude demure,
So innocent, ſo ſimple, and ſo pure!
Where learn'd they CUPID's wiles to prove?
Why --- in the Dove houſe, to be ſure;
For ever wooing,
Billing, cooing,
What better ſchool for love?

FABLE

FABLE CII.

The Rose and the Butterfly.

A Damask Rose, just opening from the bud,
Amongst a thousand sweets the sweetest stood;
With all its charms display'd.
When lo! a Butterfly bestreak'd with gold,
A flutt'ring coxcomb, pretty, fine, and bold,
His fond addresses made.
The yielding flower receives him to her arms,
Unfolds her bosom, and gives up her charms.
But e'er the Sun had sip'd the morning dew,
Sated with joy away th' Inconstant flew.
When thus the Rose its Jealousy express'd,
Come, Zeph'rus, come, and fan my breast:
For oh! with love and rage I burn.

So

So ſoon, to leave me ſo!
Ungrateful Inſect! go:
And never more return.
Phœbus had near his daily journey run,
As much to ſay, 'twas ſetting Sun,
Before the Roving ſpark came back.
He knew what he had done:
And was prepar'd for an attack;
As conſcious how a lover's quarrel ends,
A curtain lecture, kiſs and friends.
I need not aſk, the Roſe diſdainful cry'd,
Where you have ſpent ſo many hours!
In yon parterre I ſaw you full employ'd,
By turns careſſing different flowers;
'Twas there your perfidy I ſpy'd.
Nay in the ſhrub'ry too---you ſlipt aſide!
Were it on primroſe banks, in woodbine bowers,
That you had gone aſtray;

Such rural beauties void of art,
Which every blooming grace impart,
Might give ſome colour for your ſtay.
But oh! that I ſhould e'er behold
The once belov'd, who revel'd on my ſweets,
Careſs the green-ſick *Snow-drop*, pale and cold:
And taſte of every common weed he meets!
Nay, to your glory be it ſaid,
I ſaw you ſettle on a *Piſs-a-bed*.
All this is very fine, my Dear,
The Butterfly reply'd,
But I ſhall make it plain appear,
There's no love loſt on either ſide.
Scarce had I left the fragrant bliſs,
(Your hue more roſy with the parting kiſs,)
When I beheld your boſom bare,
Alluring every flutterer in the air.
Had you been ſatisfy'd with thoſe like me,

Gay,

Gay, airy, frolickſom and free,
I ſhould not have ſuch cauſe to moan.
But not contented with the Bee,
You took up with a Drone.
Nay worſe: O fye for ſhame!
A naſty fly, too vile to name,
From yonder dunghill reeking hot,
Perfum'd with you know what,
Approach'd: and you ſubmitted to his flame.
Huſh! cries the Muſe, and let us know
What mighty moral you'll diſcloſe?
'Tis plain your Butterfly's a Beau;
A modiſh Belle, your Roſe.
Nay, if you gueſs ſo right, I've nought to ſay,
What! on the wedding day,
Commence the plague of both their lives?
Why, is it not the modern way
Between ſome huſbands and their wives?

FABLE

FABLE CIII.

The MULE proud of his GENEALOGY.

A Prelate's Mule puff't up with pride
Was ever boaſting of his Pedigree.
No Shenkin on the mother's ſide
Deſcended from a nobler race than he.
The Mare my mother, was his conſtant prate;
On ſuch a courſe ſhe won the plate:
His Mother's ſire was of ſo high a ſtation,
That he paraded at the Coronation.
In all he ſaid, it was his mother ſtill;
But not a word by whom he was begot.
At length, grown old, it was his lot
To be turn'd over to the mill.

Strip't

Strip't of his trappings and good fare,
Upon the common ſent to graſs,
Forgetful of his high-bred mother Mare,
He calls to mind --- his father was an Aſs.

When upſtarts overbearing, ſaucy, proud,
Forget the ſource from whence they ſpring,
Should ſome ſad turn of fate misfortunes bring,
Th' unpitying crowd
Strait cry aloud,
'Tis juſt, by Reaſon's and Religion's rules,
Adverſity's a rod for fools.

FABLE CIV.

The OLD MAID.

A Certain Maid, too prudiſhly inclin'd,
Tho' not averſe to HYMEN's band,
Propos'd, within herſelf, to find,
The moſt compleat of all mankind,
E'er ſhe would give her hand.
He muſt be handſome, witty, rich, and young;
Of gentle manners, and of graceful air;
Not over brown, nor over fair;
One that knew when to ſpeak, or hold his tongue;
From every vice, and folly free,
Nor jealous hot, nor cold indifferent be;
Mark that!
The Prude knew what ſhe would be at.

Now Men of birth and rank, and parts,
Approach'd at beauty's call,
To make an offer of their hearts;
But ſhe deſpis'd them all.
One had a ſquint in his left eye;
Another's noſe was all awry;
This was of every manly charm poſſeſt,
But then, he ne'er had been in France;
With ſenſe and wit another bleſt,
Could neither ſing nor dance:
'Twas this, 'twas that,
'Twas lord knows what!
For Prudes are ever over nice,
Diſdainful, formal and preciſe.
Theſe gone: ſome Men of lower claſs,
Now proffer terms to wed.
Am I reduc'd to ſuch a paſs?
She cry'd, then ſcrew'd her mouth, and toſs'd her head,

To take up with each paultry fellow!
Thank heaven! the fruit is not ſo mellow.
Who waits there? JOHN, how came this thing about?
The way theſe folks got in, pray ſhew them out.
I am not quite ſo deſperate grown,
To gnaw my ſheets--- becauſe I lye alone.

Thus glorying in her ſcornful airs, and pride,
Years ſlipt away --- and ſhe not yet a bride!
The plum began to loſe its bloom:
And now, with grief, ſhe ſees each day,
A ſmile, or grace, ſtill creep away,
And leave a wrinkle in its room.
Vainly her charms ſhe ſtudies to retain;
Paint, patches, and pomatums, all are vain.
O Time! thou greateſt robber of all robbers!
What pity 'tis, there are no Beauty-Jobbers!
A houſe repair'd may look as good as new;

But for a face, 'twill never do.
Our Prude began to vex, and fret;
Her looking-glaſs was ever ſaying,
What! don't you ſee your charms decaying?
Make haſte, or you'll no huſband get.
Some ſtrange deſires!---more urgent ſtill,
Complain'd ſhe us'd her beauty ill.
Do prudiſh boſoms harbour then deſires?
Pure are their thoughts, and barely warm their fires.
Of that you'll be convinc'd anon.
For now reduc'd to her laſt ſtake,
She was reſolv'd a puſh to make,
For what her heart was ſet upon;
And ſo for love, and Virtue's ſake,
She wedded with her footman JOHN.

Would you the ſweets of virtuous love enjoy?
Young maids, for you I tell the tale,

Be not too yielding, nor too coy;
CUPID is an unlucky boy,
A feather ſometimes turns the ſcale.
Where age, and wealth, and humours ſuit,
Let not a trifle raiſe diſpute.
For ſhe who is too hard to pleaſe,
Will run the riſk (pray note it well)
To live a maiden all her days;
And then lead apes in hell.

FABLE CV.

The VULTURS and the PIDGEONS.

AMongſt a certain feather'd nation,
By MARS's inſtigation,
A dreadful civil war aroſe.
It was not amidſt thoſe
Whoſe warbling throats proclaim th' approaching Spring,
And rouſe all nature up to love and ſing;
Nor thoſe which VENUS couples to her car;
It was the Vulturs, Birds with harpy claws,
And murd'ring beaks, that wag'd this civil war
For ſome dead dog, or ſuch like dirty game.
As oft you've ſeen, againſt all faith and laws,
With a leſs ſpecious cauſe,
Your human Vulturs do the ſame.

So

So fell, ſo furious, was the battle!
Without the claſh of ſwords, or cannon's rattle,
That all the ſky was in a dire uproar!
It rain'd down blood--- what would you more?
But how deſcribe inteſtine woes?
Where friends become the worſt of foes.
To tell the horrors, and diſmay,
And all the havoc of the day!
How many heroes met untimely death!
Unburied left, to hungry dogs a prey,
Would e'en have put old HOMER out of breath;
Tho' he as much as moſt could ſay.
Suffice for us, to tell in brief,
That many a common bird, and many a chief,
Pay'd dearly for this deſperate fray.
To PLUTO's realm arriv'd ſo great a flock!
The ghoſts of Vulturs ſlain!
PROMETHEUS hop'd upon his rock,

A reſpite to obtain;
And be deliver'd from his gnawing pain.

Another, but more tender-hearted, nation,
With necks of beauteous changing hue,
Whoſe whole employment is to bill and cooe,
Mov'd with the bowels of commiſeration,
And ſhock't at ſuch a bloody ſight,
Reſolv'd to ſtop th' unnatural fight.
Wherefore, more ſlaughter to prevent,
Ambaſſadors were from the dove-houſe ſent;
Who by their tender mediation,
Managed ſo well the negotiation,
That 'twas agreed, hoſtilities ſhould ceaſe;
So made a truce: and then patch'd up a peace.
The conſequence of which you'll find.
Theſe bloody-minded Birds of prey,
To fighting ſtill inclin'd,

Pounced

Pounced every other creature in their way.
But moſt ungrateful! yet moſt true!
The Pidgeons chiefly felt their claws.
What had thoſe loving fools to do,
To interfere with ſuch a Crew,
As know not love, nor gratitude, nor laws?

Amongſt a wicked, reſtleſs, fighting race,
With whom you never can have laſting peace,
Diviſion ſtrive to ſow;
If you would ſave the world from tears,
Set them together by the ears:
No treaty binds a faithleſs foe.

Such things were done, in times of yore;
A word's enough --- I ſay no more.

FABLE

FABLE CVI.

The LYONESS's Funeral.

QUEEN Lyoneſs, of bloody fame,
Demiſed; and all the Courtiers came,
As 'tis the uſual formal way,
Condoling compliments to pay;
Which, far from giving you relief,
Is an addition to one's grief,
The Royal obſequies were now proclaim'd;
The ceremonial fixt, the day was nam'd:
And all the ſubjects round, from far and near,
In deepeſt black, were order'd to appear.
Now horrid ſcreams re-echo thro' the Den;
For as the Lyon roar'd his moan,
The Creatures all gave groan for groan,
As Courtier-like as Men.

What

What is this Court, ſo often nam'd?
A place unlike all other places;
Where of themſelves folks ſeem aſham'd,
And never ſhew their natural faces,
But, as time ſerves, are good or bad.
A mere cameleon ſort of thing,
Which turns and veers as does the King;
If ſorry, ſorrowful; if merry, glad.
Whoever has a Courtier ſeen,
May prove without diſpute,
That man as well as brute,
Is nothing more than a machine.
Around the ſtage they ſtand, as it behoves,
And as the wire is pull'd, the puppet moves.

But to return: amidſt the general woe,
The ſtag, it ſeems, ſhed not a tear:
How could he ſorrowful appear,

When

When he had loſt his greateſt foe?
For 'twas not long ago,
A milk white Hind, his beauteous wife,
Was by the Lyoneſs depriv'd of life:
Who oft beſides his children's blood had quaff't---
In ſhort, he did not weep;
And as at Court detraction's ne'er aſleep,
Some flatt'rers ſaid, that he had laugh'd.
Nothing ſo terrible! the wiſe man ſings,
As is the voice of angry kings.
O heavens! the Lyon roar'd, Thou miſcreant vile,
When all is woe and grief, how durſt thou ſmile?
And ſhall I not juſt vengeance take;
For her dear, ſacred, injur'd ſake,
Whom thou preſum'ſt to ſcorn?
Yes: on thy head my wrath I'll pour,
And then thy hated corpſe devour,
As ſure as thou waſt born.

Haſte

Haſte all ye tygers, wolves, and bears,
Who firſt this beaſt to atoms tears,
Shall foremoſt in our favour ſtand ---
O ſtop! dread Sir, your dire command,
Cry'd out the Stag, and liſten to my voice;
You all like me have reaſon to rejoice.
As in yon meadow I deſponding lay,
Preparing for the rites of this ſad day,
Seated upon a cloud, ſerenely bright,
Your royal ſpouſe appear'd before my ſight.
Ceaſe, ceaſe my friend, ſhe cry'd, this uſeleſs woe,
Nor longer let the King in tears o'erflow.
Immod'rate grief diſpleaſes heaven;
Then let him know,
That whilſt he mourns below,
Eternal bliſs above, to me is given:
His tenderneſs, I own, adds Joy to Joy ---
Then, on the wings of Zephyrs mounting high,

All

All rob'd in white! and crown'd with roſes!
She vaniſh'd from my gazing eye.
He ſpoke, and ſmil'd: when all began to cry
Huzza! it is our Queen's Apotheoſis!
The Stag admir'd, careſt, embrac'd,
Inſtead of meeting an untimely end,
Was in the higheſt favour plac'd;
And treated as a friend.

With pleaſing dreams amuſe the great,
No matter whether wrong or right;
Do but the hook with flatt'ry bait,
They'll bite.

FABLE

FABLE CVII.

PROGNE' and PHILOMELA.

PROGNE', if we the legend follow,
A Princeſs once, tho' now a Swallow,
Forſook a while her ſmoky habitation;
And down into the country wing'd her flight,
To ſeek her ſiſter PHILOMELA's ſtation:
Who liv'd remote from mortal ſight.
Within the thickeſt of a wood,
The lonely mourner penſive ſtood;
There day and night, and all night long,
Whilſt on a thorn ſhe leans her breaſt,
She warbles forth her plaintive Song.
When PROGNE' thus the Nightingale addreſt;
O leave this melancholy place!
And back return with me to THRACE.

Shall

Shall Wolves and Bears alone rejoice,
To hear the muſick of your voice?
Oh no: return; for who ſo ſweetly ſings,
Is fitter much to charm the ears of kings!
Beſides, theſe groves recall, as needs they muſt,
The horrid ſcene of brutal luſt,
When the hot THRACIAN forced you to his arms;
Raviſh'd your ſweets, and rifled all your charms----
Ah Siſter! PHILOMELA made reply,
That is the very reaſon why
I ſhun your Cities, far from faithleſs Men;
Much more would they remind me of the fact;
When, every day, I ſhould behold them act
Such ſhocking deeds again!

FABLE CVIII.

The MAN who knew his DESTINY.

SOmewhere in Aſia, we are told,
A man was ſuffer'd to unfold
The book of Fate: wherein he found related
The honours, and the woes that for him waited.
He was to be (after ſome meaner things)
A Monarch powerful, and great!
Then dye a Slave: as often is the fate
Of Aſiatic Kings.
Such revolutions are the ſport
Of thoſe who from th' Olympian court,
Witneſs you know what erſt befell,
As HOMER, and ſome others tell.
Our future Monarch pines in thought,
And feels his grandeur dearly bought.

He overlooks all Joys between,
And dwells upon the laſt ſad ſcene.
Like *Monteſuma* cruelly betray'd,
Who fell a victim to the Spaniard's rage;
Or like proud *Bajazet*, within his cage,
A footſtool to his Conqu'ror made.
Theſe dreadful objects, ever in his ſight,
Perplex his mind both day and night.
O Deſtiny! he cry'd,
For pity's ſake, this ſhocking proſpect hide.
His prayer was heard; the ſcene is clos'd.
And now with joyful eyes!
The throne at diſtance he eſpies,
Nor longer fears to be depos'd.
And was he happier for this change of fate?
Not he: no Joys he knows before he reigns.
And oh! how long he needs muſt wait,
E're he the bliſs in view attains!

O Jove! he cry'd, my drooping ſpirits raiſe,
Nor let me pine for what I ſee;
Annihilate the tedious days,
That ſtand between the crown and me.
I ne'er true happineſs ſhall own,
Till I am ſeated on the throne.
Nor would'ſt thou e'en be happy then,
Kind Deſtiny, reply'd!
To make thee eaſy, I thy fate muſt hide;
So gave him to his ignorance again.

Whate'er is incident to human ſtate,
Wrote down within the book of Fate,
'Tis well that mortals cannot know!
Impatience would their promis'd bliſs deſtroy,
Nor could they preſent happineſs enjoy,
In dread of future woe.

FABLE CIX.

The SCOLD.

A MAN was married for his ſins---
Hey day! how's this your tale begins?
Dare you traduce the holy ſtate?
No, Love forbid. What I relate
Will chance to happen now and then,
Tho' blanks ſhould be but one in ten;
Some folks will ſay, who know the worſt,
That I the lott'ry have revers'd.
Our man was of the wretched few,
Whoſe wife would never buckle to;
Both morn and eve, and all the day long
Was heard the clamour of her tongue.

Nothing

Nothing could quell her ceaſleſs prate;
To bed too ſoon, or up too late;
It is, 'tis not; 'tis black, 'tis white;
'Twas you are wrong, 'tis I am right.
Were ever Servants ſo unruly?
You are a pretty maſter truly?
I will a reformation bring about,
Or turn the houſe quite inſide out.
At length, quite tir'd with this perpetual din,
The huſband pack'd her to ſome place remote,
To live on diet ſpare and thin,
Till ſhe had chang'd her note.
But who can change the Negro's ſkin?
'Tis what I'd ſooner ſtrive to do,
Than to attempt to tame a ſhrew.
Some ſix months now were gone and paſt;
The huſband thought her ſpirit down,
And ſent for her again to town.

How fared my Jewel, ſince we parted laſt?
I hope the pleaſures of a country life
Were not diſpleaſing to my wife.
I lik'd the country well enough, quoth ſhe,
But 'twas my great vexation, there, to ſee
Thoſe Shepherds, which you keep in pay,
Under pretence of feeding ſheep,
Do nothing elſe but pipe and play,
Saunter along, and eat and ſleep.
Not them alone but all the folks about;
Each idle drab, and lazy lout!
Indeed when e'er we met, I play'd my part.
For which they hated me at heart;
Nay openly; all ſuch as dar'd to ſhew it.
But that I valued not a ſtraw;
I kept them both in fear, and awe,
I would be Miſtreſs: aye, and made them know it.
Madam enough; I'm ſatisfied:

The Huſband ſtraight reply'd.
If thoſe who ſaw you ſcarcely once a day,
Could not endure your plaguy way,
Then how ſhall they your noiſe abide,
Who all day long muſt hear you chide?
And what muſt I your huſband do;
Whom you would plague all day---and all night too.
No, pray return from whence you came;
If e'er I live with ſuch a ſcolding dame,
O! may I ſtill, after this wretched life,
Be curſt with ſuch another wife!
Nay more: inſtead of one, may I have two;
If ſuch another can be found as you.

Was goodneſs but innate with beauty,
I'd ſeek a wife to morrow.
But oh! inſtead of pleaſure, love, and duty,
'Tis often contradiction, pain and ſorrow.

How like a fuſty batchelor you talk?
Methinks, I hear a wrinkled maid cry out;
The grapes are ſour, 'tis plain, by all this rout:
For me: I'd gnaw my ſheets, and live on chalk,
Sooner than wed with ſuch a churliſh lout.
Pray good dear Madam, be not in a paſſion,
I own there's reaſon in your ſpite;
But ſhould ſome Joker lay his laſh on,
Would he not ſay, we both are in the right?

FABLE

FABLE CX.

The RABBITS.

OFt have I thought, as I have gaz'd on Man,
How like the brutes he acts, without a plan.
Still unreflecting led along,
As paſſions happen weak, or ſtrong.
But leſt my arguments ſhould fail,
I'll prove my ſyſtem, by a tale.

Suppoſe at early dawn, with gun in hand,
I near ſome warren take my ſtand;
Or to be ſurer of my hit,
I climb a tree, and there I ſit.
Like JOVE, high ſeated on th' Olympian hill,
I hurl my thunder as I will;
And now and then --- a Rabbit kill.

At noiſe of the tremendous ſound,
The creatures ſcamper under ground.
But ſoon the dread alarm is o'er,
The danger paſt is quite forgot;
About they ſkip it, as before,
And tempt again the fatal ſhot.
And is it not the ſame with Men?
Whom nothing can controul, no danger check.
The wretch ſtill dripping from the watry wreck,
Repairs his bark, and ſails again.
Of ſuch examples there are plenty;
One more will do as well as twenty.

When thro' the village runs a ſtranger Cur,
Amongſt the home bred Dogs, think what a ſtir!
With barking, biting they prevent his ſtay;
And drive him from the pariſh, far away.

In this deſcription don't you find
A real picture of mankind?
In every ſtate of human life,
At court or city, country or the town,
Where int'reſt vies, there will be ſtrife:
All pull an Interloper down.
If openly they cannot make him trip,
They'll undermine, and turn back-biters,
And then ſhould Prudes, and Critics hold the whip!
Lord help the beauties, and the modern writers!

FABLE

FABLE CXI.

TIME present and TIME to come.

TWO Mountebanks, in former ages,
Time present, and his brother *Time to come*,
Somewhere I think in ancient Rome,
Sat up their diff'rent ſtages.
Time preſent cry'd to all the paſſers by,
Stop if you're wiſe, the preſent hour enjoy.
The goods I ſell, I give in hand;
Fair dealing all, no contraband.
My Brother there, if you'll my word believe,
Will promiſe much, and nothing give.
I hear him call you to his lure,
And aſk no money, if no cure.
But if you truſt to what he ſays,

You will repent it all your days,
When *Time to come*, all tinſel'd o'er,
(No Mountebank e'er glitter'd more)
In pompous ſtate, ſtood full in view;
And thus harangu'd the dazzled crew.
I come not here, my friends, by way of job,
To cheat your ſenſes, and your pockets rob.
No, no: you'll find me honeſt, true and ſteady.
As for my brother there, with all his noiſe
About your welfare, and your real joys,
What ſells he ought, but what you have already!
For me, when I my goods unfold,
You'll find them worth their weight in gold.
Would you your rival's hopes defeat?
At Court be powerful and great?
Or what is better ſtill than all!
Be happy in the marriage ſtate?
Say what you will, I wait your call.

Is wealth your paſſion? name the ſum.
Have you ne'er taſted perfect bliſs?
Not I: nor know I where it is?
Why, live in hopes --- 'tis all to come.
You ſee *Time preſent* there; look on,
Preſto: where is he now? he's gone.
The Jugler thus th' unthinking crowd deceiv'd;
Alone was hanſel'd, and alone believ'd.
And ever ſince, too true we find,
Man to his real int'reſt blind,
Neglectful of the preſent hour,
Let's ſlip the good that's in his power,
Whilſt only what's to come employs his mind.

FABLE CXII.

The COBLER and his NEIGHBOUR.

A Cobler happy --- happier than a King,
From morn to eve, was heard to ſing;
For ſweet Content came every day to teach him.
Should BEARD or LOWE in JOBSON's notes,
Attempt to ſtretch their tuneful throats,
Their pipes would crack e'er they could reach him.
His neighbour rich as any ſupercargo,
Could neither, ſing alas! nor ſleep.
Not that he dreaded an embargo,
Nor was he anxious how his hoard to keep;
Such apprehenſions ne'er could ſhake him.
But ſo it was; till morning dawn,
He ſcarce did e'er begin to yawn,
When ſure as day, the Cobler ſung to wake him.

What

What pity 'tis, the rich and great,
Can't purchaſe ſleep, as well as meat?
Our CROESUS to the Cobler ſent,
In hopes his ſinging to prevent.
Quoth he, good neighbour, how do'ſt do?
An pleaſe your worſhip, how do you?
I thank you, friend: but prithee tell me why,
Thou art ſo merry all day long?
It does one good to hear thy jovial ſong.
One of theſe days I muſt apply
For what I hope thou won't refuſe---
But pray 'twixt thee and I,
How much a year do'ſt get, in mending ſhoes?
Lord bleſs you, Sir! the Cobler made reply,
Such calculations ne'er our heads employ.
What I affirm you may believe;
If we can make but both ends meet,
From Monday morn to Sunday eve,
Our time is bleſt, and life is ſweet,

Then

Then how much doſt thou earn a day?
Why ſometimes, more and ſometimes leſs:
For to be ſure, I muſt confeſs,
The ale houſe, now and then, will lead aſtray;
For which at home the Devil's to pay.
Tho' NELL is pretty good --- but ſhe's a wife ---
Quoth CROESUS, O! I envy thee thy life!
Thou art the happieſt of mankind.
Here take theſe hundred guineas: and be ſure
Thou hoard'ſt them up, ſafe and ſecure,
In caſe of want; for Fortune's blind.
The Cobler took the purſe,
For better and for worſe,
Juſt as before he did his NELL;
For who could tell,
Was it a bleſſing, or a curſe?
JOBSON went home, and thought, no doubt,
Himſelf as rich as any King.

But from that day, it ſo fell out,
He never more was heard to ſing.
He hid his gold deep in the earth;
And with it buried all his mirth.
With ceaſleſs fears, and cares perplext:
Reſtleſs all night and all day vext.
Does he but hear the ſtirring of a Mouſe!
The thieves are broke into the houſe---
Then up he ſtarts! with grief oppreſt;
Is wealth, he cry'd, the ſource of all this pain?
O Neighbour! give me back my joy and reſt,
And take your gold again.

FABLE

FABLE CXIII.

The Dogs.

A Dog, each morning, to the Cook convey'd
His Maſter's dinner, in a baſket plac'd;
And tho' the ſmell provok'd, forbore to taſte,
Nor ever once his charge betray'd.
'Tis very odd, and yet 'tis true!
That Men ſhould temp'rance preach!
And with the Brutes ſucceed to teach,
What they themſelves could never do!
Temptations will ariſe,
That no Man can withſtand;
For ſpite of Virtue's cries,
Gold will attract his hand,
And beauty draw his eyes:

For who can ſuch allurments ſpurn?
A Methodiſt ſighs out, 'tis I.
'Tis not genteel to give the lye:
I to the Brutes return.

Our Dog, it ſeems, was one of thoſe
That could reſiſt the moſt delicious bait;
As he, one day, was bringing home the meat,
A ſturdy Maſtiff ſtrove to interpoſe,
And would, by force, out of the baſket eat.
Our prudent Porter, to ſecure the prog,
Sat down the baſket, and attack'd the Dog.
But whilſt theſe two were tearing throat, and ears,
A troop of famiſh'd Curs appears.
Our Dog, the crowd unable to reſiſt,
Cry'd out, brave Hector, let's deſiſt;
And ſince I can't my Maſter's dinner ſpare,
Ere theſe thieves come, it is but fit
That you and I ſhould have a bit:
So ſaid: fell to, and eat his ſhare.

And

And now the other Dogs all hungry ran,
With howling, jangling,
Snarling, wrangling,
Euch pulling, tearing, getting what he can.

Is not a certain meeting pictur'd here?
Into our Veſtry caſt your eye:
Church-wardens, Pariſh-Clerk, and Overſeer,
All have a finger in the pye.
Should one, more ſcrup'lous than the reſt,
Take Virtue for his guide,
And fancy the Poor's money ill apply'd,
His honeſty would be a Jeſt.
They'll ſhew him, by their conſtant rule,
That he who won't conform, muſt be a fool.
He's ſoon convinc'd, that all is fair,
And is the firſt to ſeize his ſhare.

FABLE CXIV.

FRIENDS too much of a mind.

FOUR friends (the ſtory is a little ſtrange,)
Of different notions, different taſte,
Seem'd for each other quite miſplac'd;
And yet none e'er deſir'd to change.

I hate your verſe; and I your proſe;
This blames the cauſe, and that defends:
Thus conſtantly diſputes aroſe;
But in the main they ſtill were friends.

The conteſt ran at length ſo high,
That one of them was heard to cry,
O could we but agree!
How truly happy ſhould we be!
For ſince we quarrel, and yet love,
How laſting muſt our friendſhip prove,

If

If all alike we were inclin'd?
And as one heart, had but one mind?
O would kind Heaven! the bleſſing grant;
'Tis what I wiſh, and what we want.
They all approv'd this peaceful ſcheme,
And to APOLLO's temple came.
The God beſtow'd the boon requir'd.
And ſatisfied, they home retir'd;
Where now they ſaunter on a hum-drum life;
No contradiction, noiſe, or ſtrife,
E'er interupts their quiet days;
Who ever ſpeaks, is ſure of praiſe;
Aſk what you will, 'tis anſwer'd *yes*.
And what's the conſequence of this?
Inſipid to each other grown,
Their pleaſure pall'd, their ſpirit flown,
In conſtant yawns they paſs the day;
Whilſt friendſhip cools and ſteals away.

And now, in hopes to make amends,
Each ſought for more diverting Friends;
Such as could ſay
Both yea and nay;
For without that all converſation ends.

For ſhould Mankind
Be of one mind,
How dull and flat were human life!
A little Jarring,
Far from marring,
Enhances Love --- Like Man and Wife.

FABLE

FABLE CXV.

A MONARCH for the BRUTES.

THE Beaſts, as did the Iſraelites of old,
Once on a time reſolv'd to have a king;
Tho' by ſome Prophet they were told,
They would repent the thing.
But they were fixt; and for their Monarch choſe
The Ox; for mildneſs and for goodneſs fam'd;
And thence, his Majeſty Pacific nam'd.
But then he had not courage to oppoſe
Domeſtic Enemies, nor foreign foes.
Like TITUS, he would ſigh, and ſay,
I've done no good, I've loſt a day!
The bears and wolves around, incurſions made,
(Encourag'd by his peaceful ſway)

Ravag'd

Ravag'd his frontiers, contributions laid,
And made each plain and foreſt pay.
Inſtead of marching forth theſe robbers to defeat,
He ſent Ambaſſadors to parly and to treat.
(Like our firſt JAMES: yet be it underſtood
Tho' peaceful as our OX, not half ſo good.)
At length he was depos'd; and in his ſtead,
The Beaſts now plac'd the Lyon at their head;
As one who could their rights maintain,
Check foes abroad, and vice at home reſtrain.
And ſo he did: but then
He reign'd as Kings deſpotic do o'er Men;
That know no laws but their own boundleſs will,
And dare, becauſe they dare, the blood of thouſands ſpill.
Shall we endure this NERO of the wood,
Who ſports alike in foes and ſubjects blood?
O may he periſh! cry'd out one and all;
Who like a Tyrant reigns, ſhould like a Tyrant fall.

So

So ſaid, ſo done: he welters in his gore ---
When thus the Ox, who was depos'd before;
Brothers, I murmur'd not at your decree;
You pleas'd yourſelves, and I from cares am free.
But for another King, might I adviſe,
Proclaim the Elephant, if you are wiſe:
In him both ſtrength and goodneſs join;
Then give your votes, as I do mine.
Your happineſs is all my view,
He'll prove your father and defender too.
So ſpoke the Ox. And now all ſhout, and ſing,
God ſave king Elephant! long live our King!

O you by heaven anointed for the throne!
If by your ſubjects, you would be rever'd?
Endeavour to be lov'd, eſteem'd and fear'd:
You muſt be all, or none.

FABLE

FABLE CXVI.

The MERCHANT and the BASSA.

To JOHN PAYNE, Esq.

E'ER yet the Muse her task has done,
Accept, my Friend, these honest lays:
'Tis Friendship prompts, which from our youthful Days,
Has never seen a setting sun.
And O! be it my pride, my pleasure and my praise,
To say, it lasts, as it begun.
Whilst you, an honour to AUGUSTA's walls,
Support the dignity and worth of trade,
I'm launching forth --- Just as APOLLO calls,
Midst rocks, and shoals, and gusts and squalls,
O haste! I call you to my aid.

Let

Let Critics ſtorm --- yet ſtill ſhall I rejoice,
Whilſt your known worth protects your friend;
I value more your ſingle voice,
Than if ten thouſand ſhould commend.
From your regard for me, this truth I ſcan,
Should they the Poet ſink, you'll ſave the Man.

Once on a time, 'tis ſaid,
A Grecian merchant dealt amongſt the Turks;
And to promote ſome manufact'ring trade,
A contract with a certain Baſſa made,
To countenance, and recommend the works.
For which, no doubt, he handſomely was paid.
The Sum indeed was ſuch, as yet
The profits ſcarce could clear the debt.
Three other Turks, of lower ranks,
Offer'd our Merchant their ſupport,
They'd warrant him for leſs, with thanks,

Than what the great Man had at court.
I'll do the Job for leſs,
Sounds in ſome traders ears, as you may gueſs.
The Grecian, now his former contract cancels,
And ſtraight his new Protectors hanſels.
The Baſſa was inform'd of all,
And it was wiſper'd in his ear,
That if his life was dear,
'Twere prudent to procure their fall.
For that by poiſon or ſome other means,
They had a reſolution made
To ſend him to protect the trade,
Down on the gloomy ſhore where PLUTO reigns.
On this, the Turk behav'd, we're told,
As ALEXANDER did of old;
For full of confidence and truſt,
He to the Grecian went; and thus he ſaid,
Think not, my friend, that I am ſo unjuſt
As to believe what to thy charge is laid.

I now am come with thee to dine;
And tho' a Muſſulman, to taſte thy wine.
Give me the bowl---
I fear no ill it can impart.
Thy open countenance and honeſt heart,
Are pledges for thy inmoſt ſoul.
Such black deſigns, which I deteſt and ſcorn,
Within a Merchant's breaſt were never born.
And as for thoſe, who have miſled
Thy eaſy faith, they are not worth a thought.
Then hear a fable, which I've ſomewhere read,
Leſt thy experience ſhould be dearly bought.

A ſhepherd once, to guard his fleecy care,
A Maſtiff kept; one of ſo large a ſize,
That for his daily fare,
A loaf or two could ſcarce ſuffice.
When ſome one ſaid, what folly 'tis of thine

To

To keep ſo great a Beaſt?
Three other dogs might feaſt
On what he can but barely dine!
This weak advice, the thrifty Shepherd took;
And in his Maſtiff's ſtead,
Three ſmaller dogs were fed.
Which when the Wolf appear'd, their charge forſook.
And thus 'twill fare with thee,
When thou forſak'ſt a Man like me,
For ſuch a wretched crew.
Take what I ſay in friendly light,
I wiſh thee well; adieu.
The Merchant thought the moral true:
Stuck to his patron, and did right.

Would you avoid the ſad diſaſters,
Which from oppreſſion ſpring?
Much better truſt to one good powerful King,
Than to a ſcore of petty ſovereign Maſters.

FABLE

FABLE CXVII.

The HORSE and the LYON.

A Horſe, knight errant as 'tis ſaid,
To ſeek adventures ſallied forth;
Far from the frozen North,
Where he was born and bred.
Southwards he gallop'd, to explore
Thoſe warmer climes, of which he had been told;
And now he greets fair Albion's ſhore,
Where liberty recalls the age of gold:
But where each folly, vice and crime,
Proclaim aloud the iron time.
To Paris next you may be ſure:
Thro' Italy then made a tour;
And then, we find, came back again
By ſouth of France, and ſo thro' Spain;

He cros'd the Straits, to rambling yet inclin'd,
And leaves the coaſt of Barbary behind.
Advancing ſtill to Lybia's ſandy plains,
Where under ſultry ſkies a Lyon reigns.
Our ſtranger now is introduced to court;
You're welcome, ſaid the King of beaſts,
Sit down and ſhare our royal feaſts;
Let's hear your tale, 'twill give us ſport.
Ulysses thus, his ſtory told
To King Alcinous, of old.
Sir, quoth the horſe, firſt bowing low,
Ere I begin my true narration,
'Tis fit your Majeſty ſhould know
How different yours is from my Nation!
Here men are black! with us as white as ſnow---
Snow! what is that? the Lyon cry'd;
Why, dread my Liege! the Horſe reply'd,
Inſtead of watry drops that rain down here,
Like feathers in the air our ſhowers appear;

Which

Which falling ſcreen each object from our ſight,
Beneath one univerſal robe of white.
Rivers, which here in conſtant motion flow,
Congealed with us, as hard as marble grow;
Unwet on foot, we croſs them ore---
This is too groſs: I'll hear no more,
The Lyon ſaid, then up he ſprings;
'Tis thus you travellers impoſe on Kings.
Begone this moment from our ſight;
Amuſe ſuch fools as take delight
To hear abſurd unnatural things.
In vain the Horſe attempts to tell
What might his cauſe ſupport;
Unheard, they hooted him from court.
And happy! he came off ſo well.

Free-thinkers thus, in ſelf-opinion ſtrong,
Deny whatever is above their reach:

This is improbable, and that is wrong.
And ſhould you certain doctrines preach,
Immediately they cry,
Indeeed, I don't believe it;
It is impoſſible! and why?
Becauſe I can't conceive it.

For ever thus, the Ignorant decree.
But are we blind, becauſe they cannot ſee?

FABLE

FABLE CXVIII.

The FARMER and the ROBIN RED-BREAST.

A Farmer once, to ſave his grain,
Amidſt a flock of ſparrows ſhot;
And ſo it chanc'd, among the ſlain,
A Robin Red-breaſt went to pot.
When thus the dying Bird, with anguiſh ſpoke:
Alas! did I deſerve this fatal ſtroke?
I never did you any harm;
But pick'd up worms about the farm.
Your deſtiny is hard: the Boor reply'd,
And much my heart it grieves;
But 'tis your own imprudence you muſt chide.
Why did you herd with thieves?

FABLE CXIX.

The PEASANT, from the banks of the DANUBE.

JUDGE not of folks by outward ſhew,
Th' advice is good, tho' tis not new.
A ſilly * Mouſe ſome time ago,
Help'd me to prove the proverb true.
Examples greater now take place,
To ſtrengthen what I ſaid.
Remember ESOP's form and face;
And what of SOCRATES † is read.
But 'tis not them that now I quote;
The man I mean, tho' of leſs note,
To Rome deputed in his country's cauſe,

* Vide Fable 22.

† SOCRATES, the wiſeſt and moſt moral of all philoſophers, but whoſe outward appearance was little better than what we are told of ESOP's.

MARCUS

MARCUS AURELIUS thus his picture draws.
His chin and body covered o'er with hair,
Preſented to your view an unlick'd bear.
Beneath his buſhy brows, of ſandy red,
His eyes ſeem'd almoſt ſunk within his head;
With blubber lip and mooriſh noſe.
And for his cloaths
An old patch'd thing, beſtreak't with dirt,
About his loins with ruſhes girt.
This Peaſant, ſo bedeck't, was choſe
By ſeveral towns, near which the Danube flows,
To ſpeak their grievances to Rome;
And have redreſs, or know their doom.
Ye Romans! and ye Senators! he ſaid,
To my complaints attend.
But firſt, O heaven! thy kind aſſiſtance lend;
For what is Man without thy aid?
Injuſtice, cowardice, and fraud.

Witneſs the Germans, by your Legions aw'd!
Had we our priſtine virtue but maintain'd,
Vain were your armies! vain were all your fights!
Rome, by our crimes, more than her own exploits,
Was for our ſcourge ordain'd.
Dread, O ye men of Rome! the ſame ſad fate,
How are ye ſure, but ſome avenging god
May to your breaſts, our miſeries tranſlate?
And in our hands intruſt the rod?
Whilſt we with juſt retaliation burn,
And ſcourge the Romans in our turn.
What can you boaſt, more than the world beſide?
Except preeminence in vice and pride?
With peace and innocence we paſs'd our lives,
Bleſt in our children! happy in our wives!
What right had you to break our ſweet repoſe?
We never gave you cauſe to call us foes.
Did ere the Germans yet, with hoſtile bands,

Deſpoil your cities? or lay waſte your lands?
Courage they have as much as you;
Had they but your injuſtice too,
Their thunderbolts around they might have hurl'd,
And in your ſtead enſlav'd the world.
They then had govern'd on a milder plan;
Nor in the Victor loſt the Man.
As we by ſad experience feel each day,
To your rapacious Pretors left a prey.
Our rights, and liberties, all trampled on,
Extinct our commerce, and our riches gone.
In vain we ſtretch our ſuppliant hands,
Where av'rice calls, and power commands.
As from a Vultur fly th' affrighted Doves,
And ſeek for ſhelter in the thickeſt groves,
We fly our native home;
Far from the dear companions of our loves,
Leſt we ſhould propagate more ſlaves for Rome.

O Fathers! if that title you would claim?
Recall your Tyrants, and deserve the name.
If virtuous fame to gracious acts belongs,
Recall your Pretors and redress our wrongs.
But yet, alas! what hopes for us remain?
From what I here have seen, all hopes are vain!
Rome is a nest of luxury and vice;
Corruption, brib'ry, adulation,
Of all your venal posts the sordid price,
And only steps to each high station.
Do you no presents bear?
No gold, no purple, to bestow?
Your fruitless suit at once forgo:
You are not worth their care.
All this, and more, have I beheld in Rome!
I've done: and now expect my doom.
I came prepared, and to the worst resign'd;
But yet one comfort still remains,

Theſe limbs you may with fetters bind;
My ſoul is far above your chains.
He ſpoke: then proſtrate on the ground
The ſavage fell, whilſt all around,
Admir'd his courage, and his ſenſe.
And to reward his eloquence,
It was decreed, he ſhould Patrician be;
With honours loaded, fame and liberty!
And thus the ſenate puniſh'd his offence.
The Pretors were recalled; and others ſent,
With charge to uſe a milder government;
As by inſtructions 'twas expreſt.
But much I fear their griefs were ne'er redreſt,
For Governors, if we may credit fame,
Are all alike,--- or pretty near the ſame.

FABLE

FABLE CXX.

The PHOENIX and the OWL.

To his Grace THOMAS
Archbiſhop of Canterbury.

O Thou, at whoſe good name the poor rejoice,
HERRING, attend the Muſe's moral voice;
The Muſe, who dares with conſcious virtue preach
Thoſe maxims *you* by great example teach.
Be not alarm'd, no flatt'ry is in view;
I only praiſe my ſelf in praiſing you.
Worth to emblazon, merit to proclaim,
Next to deſert is a degree to fame.
The verſe which to my Prince I have addreſt
I to my Primate here ſubmit:

Read

Read then, and judge ; for you know beſt
What is, or is not fit.
Happy the Muſe ! in theſe her firſt eſſays!
If he be pleas'd, and you approve the lays.

The Phœnix, great adorer of the Sun,
After a well-ſpent life of ages paſt,
Receiv'd at laſt
The ſummons that her race was almoſt run.
Reſign'd, ſubmiſſive to the power on high,
She liv'd too well, to be afraid to die ;
And now prepar'd to end as ſhe begun.
A poor decrepit Owl that dwelt cloſe by,
Who ne'er had felt in all his days,
The Sun's enlivening rays,
From the dark hole, where he was wont to lurk,
Eſpy'd the Phœnix hard at work :
Gath'ring the ſpicy ſticks and ſweet perfume

Which

Which ſoon her body muſt conſume.
Weak, fooliſh bird! the Owl then cry'd,
To be the author of thy own deceaſe!
Why, what is life? th' Arabian Saint reply'd,
That it ſo much ſhould pleaſe?
Tis but a round of toil and pain;
The ſame thing o'er, and o'er again.
Fine talk! reſum'd the bird of night,
You that have liv'd ſix * hundred years, or more,
Perhaps in death may take delight.
For me, who ſcarce have paſt a ſcore,
Altho' infirm, † benumb'd with cold,
To life I own I ſtill would hold,
And hate that Sun whom you adore----
Ceaſe, impious wretch: I'll hear no more,
The Phœnix cry'd. How dar'ſt thou name

* PLINY ſays ſhe lives 660 years. PLIN. 20. 22.
† MECENAS was of the ſame way of thinking as the Owl. Vide Fable 17.

That pure, etherial, heavenly flame?
Parent of Nature! ſource of light!
That ſhines beneficent on all the ſame;
'Tis guilt alone that ſhuns his ſight.
But I have done --- my time draws nigh---
Repent; and learn of me to die.
Thanks, ſaid the Owl, for your kind admonition;
I am not yet prepar'd to alter my condition,
I'd rather tarry here a while.
But ſince you are ſo fond of death,
Methinks, you'd better ſpare your breath,
To kindle up your funeral pile.
The Phœnix then, with zeal inſpir'd,
Mounts reſolute her aromatic neſt,
Which quickly by the Sun was fir'd;
And gently lying down to reſt,
Triumphantly expir'd.
Some ſparks blown to and fro,

Were by the winds convey'd
To the dark manſion, where the Owl was laid;
Which ſent him ſcreeching to the ſhades below.

One ever dying, never dies,
Condemn'd to everlaſting pain.
The other from her aſhes ſhall ariſe,
And life and immortality regain.
And if I may the ſimile purſue,
(Oh would it were not quite ſo true!)
I muſt the Wicked to the Owl compare.
What flocks of ſuch ſad birds there are!
The Phœnix is but one! the Juſt how few!

FINIS.

JAN 1 [illegible] 1984

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